Sociology of Revivalism

A Study of Indianization, Sanskritization and Golwalkarism

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PREFACE

Three thousand years of Cultural continuity makes us insensitive to things Indian Cultures like individuals have their distinctive autonomy and style Much has been written on dynamism change and reform even renaissance in India There are literatures which proclaim about the catholicity simplicity and rationality—all of which it is said form a part of the ethos of Indian culture But very little has been written about irrationality anti change outlook and aggressiveness of India s counter ethos And none exists exclusively on revivalism

This monograph is an attempt to understand the nature and character of *revivalist forces* opposed to change and modernization Any comprehensive study of social change must necessarily involve an analysis of resistance to change In the background of India s long and unbroken past and the vastness and complexity of Indian social structure such an undertaking is bound to be difficult and extremely delicate One will have to traverse remote into the historical sociology psychology and politics of a whole people in any such venture so that an appreciation of revivalist ideology in its structural context may be possible However the present work has limited scope and it does not claim any perfection

Within these limitations an attempt has been made to show how organized revivalism in India has arisen out of cultural confrontation of the East and the West and of the structural changes that followed after the advent of the British It is no doubt interesting to see how an old and fossilized Indian society made valiant efforts to defend its time old traditions while she did not care much to defend her national territory at the time of British conquest! Dry generalization and escapist jargon mongering apart but when it comes to brass tacks of anaylsis and description of revivalistic ideology and behaviour in an extremely complex society like ours with its sensitive regional religious and caste characteristics it becomes impossible to be non-controversial or not offending to any one The problem becomes more vicious and excuse of being non partisan less

available to one who is himself a part of the same society and therefore a part of the controversy

No student of Indian sociology can escape the use of caste references like Brahmins or Sudras regional names like Uttar Pradesh or Maharashtra names of scripturss like the Vedas Smritis or Gita and less possible is to avoid the uses of Hindu or Muslim And when the subject is revivalism all these names in specific contexts become bestowed with favourable or un favourable connotations depending upon readers predilection However for a sociologist caste is stratification religion is an inst tution and God a concept and he goes about using all such categories with requisite objectivity and detachment that he him self feels least touchy about them and makes no attempt deli berately to defend or offend any one but in the course of unvei ling the truth of social process others may feel offended or defended

The burden of this book is not just revivalism as such but Hindu revivalism Not that there is no Muslim or Sikh or any other revivalism in India but because in the contemporary situa tion Hindu revivalism is a real threat and a danger to the country Moreover revivalism in the garb of recent demands of Indian ization has presented itself as the only cultural process of integ rating the Indian socity Therefore we have made an attempt to analyse the historical and cultural models of the process of Indianization in the past and have also explored about their suitability for the present How in a mult religious and multi regional society revivalist integration is possible is the main question Similarly revivalism is traditional and the rift between mod rnity and tradition is obvious From this point Golwalka rism as the contemporary revivalist ideology and Jana Singh and Shiv Sena as atavistic social movements have deserved our consideration

Finallay I am greatful to Mr D R Goyal editor of *Secular Democracy* but for whose persistent and friendly persu ation the writing of this book would not have been compl ted

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CHAPTER I

Sociology of Revivalism

Indianization What is it ?

The liberal and the radical recognize the need for change they are concerned with the present as well as the future The conservatives on the other hand stick to the established values and are instrumental in causing social decay and breakdown The revivalists seek their sanctuary in the past and find solace in its glorification

Thus confronted with the challenging problems of life men of different outlooks take recourse to different approaches At a time when old values and institutions are crumbling under the impact of the new and the unprecedented ideologies are bound to come up and project a variety of group interests It is a different matter that some such ideologies let out the foul breath of a dying mammoth whereas some others resound the air with the promising cry of a new born

In this context we may ask what is Indianization ? Is it a solution as some people seem to believe to the major problems of the day ? If it be so it is as old as the British Rule in India because since then there has been the slogan of *Back to Vedas* A notion that the panacea for all our ills lay in the golden age has been a persistent note of Indian history the consciousness of which we developed during the early days of the British contact At that time it was a defence mechanism to console and feel proud of ourselves and also to checkmate the on

slaught of the foreign impact on our minds It may also be argued by partisans as a strategy to rouse the people against an alien power But what does it mean today in independent India?

The implications are many and far reaching *Firstly* it assumes that there is a level of culture or an ideal cultural type which may be described as truly and purely Indian As a corollay to this it is implied that there are people in India who are far removed from that ideal level Naturally the demand for Indianization means a transformation of people from one level to the other a sort of conversion or acculturation or whatever it might be It means B must become A *Secondly*, the ideal type in this regard by its very nature is an imagery from the past and it implies going back to the golden age *Thirdly* accepting that men who advocate Indianization do it as a means to an end we have to consider it as a goal oriented action And as such the goal cannot be anything except the well being or effective survival of the nation or culture to think otherwise would mean that the advocates of Indianization are enemies of the nation This no one would wish them to be The *fourth* imperative of the concept is that there must be a mechanism for Indianization—a political party or the State or anything else such as a social movement to achieve this objective The *fifth* and most significant aspect is the consequences of this concept Of course to think of consequences on the part of the ideal type Hindu is a contradiction in terms for he is supposed to be spiritual and detached from the results of his action And yet the ordinary morals who advocate Indianization or who would be affected by it will normally think of its consequences In actuality how and what objective consequences will Indianization bring about among the different religious groups castes and regions of India? What would be the net result of such an impact from the point of view of the good—that is the well being of the nation?

Finally the suggestion of Indianization also assumes that it is the best among the alternative means available to the solution of the present day problems of India This again is implicit in the idea that men choose their tools whether it is Indianization or Westernization after proper consideration in the context of the prevailing social conditions and needs Is this actually true? These are the problems uppermost in the

minds of the people who think about such issues The question is highly academic and at once political Like a bubble from a boiling cauldron it was being thrown up from time to time since the advent of the British The slogans the people and the party labels have changed but the content of such demands have remained fairly the same throughout

Search for Indianness from Culture to Caste

The first question in the discussion on Indianization is the concept of culture A slogan may mean many things to many people and it may be misunderstood especially when political parties raise such slogans as sentimental traps set to capture votes Hence the cultural content of Indianization has to be examined People must know what is that destiny to which they are asked to go *The concept of the culture called Indian* has to be spelt out the idle type of Indian culture must be revealed If it refers to certain existing strains of culture who among us represent them ? The assumption is clear—the Hindus represent the true Indian culture

Before proceeding further with this question let us see what is culture It is that complex whole which includes knowledge belief art morals law custom and any other capabilities acquired by man as a member of society [1] It means culture includes everything that man has socially acquired—language art science customs laws institutions of every description values morals and religion material instruments like tools houses machines and means of communication and all other conceivable items that man has derived from nature Now it is to be wondered whether all Hindus are alike or even fairly alike in their culture There are vegetarians and blood sacrificing Hindus monotheists and polytheists those who believe and practise the sacramental monogamous marriage of eternal union and others who marry and divorce freely and frequently and there are Hindus who avoid seven and five degrees while selecting their mates as also others who prefer *their first cousin sisters* and brothers as the traditional choice The orthodox and the Sanskritized Brahminical castes the casteless and Godless Buddhists the sword wielding Sikhs and the nose stuffed Jains

1 E B Tylor *Primitive Culture* Vol I P 1

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who are afraid of killing germs in the atmosphere as they breathe are also sometimes considered Hindus in a broad sense

Obviously the customs and practices of such a vast range of people are not uniform Some of the traits will have to be omitted and others will have to be accepted as the ideal type of Hindu culture By a process of elimination the logical answer to this question would be that Brahmins or upper castes who are the repositories of Hindu culture should be treated as the ideal type—the model for Indianization This conclusion is unavoid able because any one looking for that elusive model of Hinduism will ultimately land up in Brahminism So the pursuit of Indian culture would end up with the caste sub culture In other words Indianization means Hinduisation which really means Brahminisation The deduction is inescapable All the rest of the Hindus many low castes and sects Sikhs Muslims Christians Buddhists Jains and others will then follow that model[1] Even this Hindu Brahminical model is not the same everywhere in India Which of the Brahmins and these too of which region deserve to be considered as the model would not be so easily settled because they are not culturally or racially the same in different regions of India

The process of model building and the search for true Indianness would automatically lead to the classification of an overwhelming majority of our people in the category of not so good Indians or un Indians who deserve to be Indianized after the model Such un Indians will naturally include all the minorities and the non Brahminical castes of Hindus and all those sections including Brahmins who have b en subjected to Westernization and who according to the current terminological niceties have got de Indianized Thus the task is stupendous at least ninety per cent of the people of India will have to be subjected to this cultural revolution or Indianization

Cultural Romanticism and Reality

Another difficulty will arise when one starts identifying truly and purely Indian traits of culture Who is Indian? The Aryan or the Dravidian? Can we consider the pre Aryan Trimurti of Indus valley civilization to be Indian? Would horse and goat sacrifices eating of cow s flesh drinking *somarasa*—as was done by the ancient Vedic Hindus—be treated

Indian ? Are we to adopt the ancient institutions of *Varna Ashram* system as Indian ? If so Indianization would mean adoption of caste system and opposition to all that was done to abolish caste disabilities during the British rule and thereafter It would also mean that the Brahmachari (student) should not be allowed to marry that he should go about begging for his and his guru ■ maintenance Above all no girl or Sudra should be permitted to undergo Brahmacharya

Many items of our material culture are *foreign in origin* Sugar gunpowder and tea are Chinese Similarly tobacco and potato are not Indian Paper or *kagha*- is an Islamic introduction to this country originally Egyptian papyrus refined by the Chinese and modernized by the West Many types of furnitures vegetables and items of cookery are also Islamic in origin Even the word *roti*—the very sustenance of our life—is Portugese And finally when we come to the West, particularly Britain our State parliamentary democracy party system economic institutions like business and trade science and technology industrial organization our armies and warfare means of communication and an unending number of other things are also western So the search for pure Indianness ■ not an easy task

Who will decide which is Indian and how is another matter May be like the greedy one who searched for the golden egg it might end up in killing the duck A culture ■ a gestalt a configuration of different parts making it up into a totality The industrial production the power structure embodied in democratic institutions the family and the stratification systems do not exist as disjointed elements so that we could accept the western Industrial production or capitalism and also bring back the traditional caste system or the joint family pattern

The material culture has completely changed in India the advanced media of communication science and technology and industrial units are the most powerful determining factors within the cultural pattern Neither waving of saffron flags nor blowing of conch shells will wish them away It ■ innocent romanticism or ignorance not to think of this as an unprecedented radical change in the Indian culture This basic change in the material culture has substantially affected all other parts

of our culture And to reverse the latter to the old superstructure of Hindu institutional arrangements and belief systems is an impossibility Unless we conjure up the idea of an *avatar* of an unusually charismatic dictator who will wipe out all our science and technology, factories, roads, rails and everything and put us back into the caste family complex of primitive village communities the irreversibility of the present trend is absolutely certain Hence those who console themselves with the belief that Bharatmata has abundant vitality to resist and nullify changes—as she was successful in the past in eliminating Jainist and Buddhist impacts the inroads of Islam the reformation movements of Kabir and others—are sadly mistaken None of those movements was supported by such a material change in culture They are often religio mystic, pious sentiments *of good and great personalities but without the requisite* material basis to support them

Motivation and Goal : The Golden Age

If the first problem was the identification of Indianness in terms of social or cultural hierarchy and space the second is in terms of time In the terminology of revivalism there is a constant strain which is in the nature of yearning to go back to the golden age where pure Indianness may be met with. This concept of the past is a two way traffic on the one hand there is the imagery of life in the past on a higher pedestal and on the other a belief that the present is degraded and intolerable This notion really fits in with our traditional concept of age and evolution of morals as degeneration from the ideal *Satya yuga* to the deplorable *Kali yuga* Such is the weight of our overbearing traditions that we have probably blinded ourselves to the realisation that human freedom dignity, equality and enlightenment of the masses as implied in the modern secular democratic institutions, mass education and the coming into being on their own of the erst while serfs and slaves the toiling masses and also the formerly oppressed and persecuted women of India who were subjected to *sati* child marriage and infanticide were some of the epoch making achievements of modern times Minds indoctrinated by a false sense of superiority of our traditions are unable to see this most significant fact of our time and so they retreat to the

past Such retreatism may be of much instrumental value to some leaders as a polititical strategy of mass manipulation but it is certainly not patriotic

The motivational mechanism of the revivalist is pull and push—his conceptualized past pulls him back to the bygone age and the present which he detests pushes him in the same direction Therefore it is necessary that he must identify his golden age—the historical culture—to which he wants others to subscribe or be Indianized Which is that period of history to which we should return ? Is that the immediate past the British period ? Or is it the Mughal period ? Surely not In the light of earlier slogans such as *Back to the Vedas* or the persistant notion that the Muslim rule was the cause of all degeneration of the Hindus and their institutions and our aversion to the British rule one can easily say that in the conscious minds of those who subscribe to the view of Indianiza tion is the lingering model of our ideal society which ought to be somewhere beyond the Mughal period Even here in all probability it is not the intention to move towards the Jainist or the Buddhist tradition because the continuous stress in the neo Hindu literature is on triumph of Sankaracharya over Buddhism All these suggest that the mind of those who talk of the past is hovering around the time of the Vedas inspite of the fact that the Vedic people were simple pastoral tribes who enjoyed a hearty meal and a heady drink They also ate cow s flesh and conducted many sacrificial ceremonies to propitiate nature or for their own wish fulfilment Even though they were simple they were clever enough to exploit and fool their brethren and so they invented in *Purusha Sukta* the story that Brahmin Kshatriya Vaisya and Sudra were created out of a primitive man when he was sacrificed by God As the story revealed further the Brahmin became divine, enjoying all types of immunities and others subordinate to him in the hierarchy They had also invented a divine origin of social order and law [2] Later in the Smritis the position hardened so much that if the Sudra were to hear the reading of the Vedas moulten lead was to be poured into his ears The idea of infallibility of the Vedas obstructed free enquiry and logic Not only the Vedas but

2 U N Ghosal *A History of Indian Political Ideas* Pp 19 20

even law codes were kept beyond criticism Manu said that ' one should not even speak with the heretics the transgressors of the caste discipline the hypocrites and logicians [3] There is no uniformity in the culture from the Vedic period to the period of Manu Smriti There are features of tribal freedom, equality and also licence during that period which became rigid orthodoxy by the time of the Smritis A divine king exploitative social order of *varnas* subjugation of women monopoly of knowledge and dehumanization of the masses and cruel and unholy social customs like *sati* infanticide and *niyoga* were the characteristics of this later period Where does our model of Indianization exist ? In the Vedic period of pastoral simplicity or in the Smriti period of *varna* rigidity ? Indeed some of them like the *varna* system and the Hindu polity (probably including the theory of divine origin of Kings) seem to be welcome to some of the prominent advocates of Indianization [4] However no sane man in the context of today ever dares to think of adopting any one of those social institutions or customs or even major ideas of those olden days as they are utterly inadequate to the present day requirements

The Test Prerequisites and Indianization

A society must satisfy its needs such as food shelter and clothing it has also to make adjustments with other neighbouring societies by evolving proper techniques of interaction Similarly internally it has to see that the parts should work in such a manner that the relationship between the parts and the whole is harmonized with the minimum of friction And finally the system has to be managed and tensions are to be solved by regulation As characterised by Parsons there are four such functions a) Goal attainment b) Adaptation c) Integration d) Pattern maintenance

How far is Indianization relevent to these needs of our society ? If it is useful it should unhesitatingly be accepted if it is not it should be rejected

(a) *Goal Attainment* What can Indianization do for the attainment of our economic goals ? Can we adopt the ancient

3 Debi Prasad Chattopadhyaya *Indian Philosophy* P 13

4 This is the view of Shri M S Golwalkar as expressed in his book *Bunch of Thoughts* See Chapter on Golwalkarism in this book

and truly Indian production patterns ? Can we make use of the truly Indian and primitive technology of the pre steam days for today s *needs of mass production* ? Do we have a system of economic organisation and factory system of bureaucracy which can be called truly Indian and which can be used today ? Of course we can Indianize the staff employed in establishments—if this ever means Indian zation as used in current terminology No doubt the word is used in this sense of replacing the workers or any position holders by men of Indian origin This may be a very negligible utility of Indianization even if it is understood in this sense But then there is the question as to who is Indian Does the concept of Indianization permit minorities and others to be in key positions in the army and other essential services ?

Further let us consider what is its role in defence with the objective of protecting ourselves from aggressors Does it mean that we adopt the original Indian warfare in disregard to the modern machinised army, navy and air force ? Such problems arise when we think of Indianization with regard to all our needs This of course does not mean that everything Indian is useless it only means that many of our ancient traditions are helpless in the face of the challenges of our time

(b) *Adaptation* Indian society lives in a world environ ment of modern science and technology of differing political and social systems of warring camps and religious groups Islam the religion of the biggest minority in India is also the religion of Pakistan and many other theocratic and not theo cratic states friendly and unfriendly to India So also Christians and Buddhists have their coreligionists in many countries with whom we have to deal How will Indianization be taken by those interested countries outside ? What will be the effect of this upon the Hindus living in other countries ? Not only this there are various tribes and castes in India who are outside the pale of Hinduism and who along with other minorities including the people of the border States of Punjab Nagaland and probably parts of the South as well as the offshore islands of Laccadives and Andamans might get alienated and they may have nothing to do with Indianization inspite of the claim of Shri Golwalkar that people in the South were always considered to

be as much Aryan as those in the North [5] In this way and in many other ways Indianization instead of being helpful estranges people from us In the name of Indianization if we have to revert to Indian systems of organisations standards measures calendars symbolisms of all kinds scientific names and techniques it would be evolution in the reverse order Broadly speaking the history of culture and civilization is not of isolation and rigidity but of contact change and evolution Ethnocentrism is a dangerous game which destroys cultures and brutalizes its advocates

(c) *Integration* Mutual relationships among the various constituents like castes religious groups backward classes tribal population and different regions is a major problem confronting the Indian society Both cultural reality on the one hand and constitutional federalism on the other bear testimony to this One might claim that Indianization of all these groups is the solution to bring about unity and integration among the people Can such a claim be made ? If this claim is admitted how do we explain the conflicts and tensions between different Hindu dominant states and regions of India There are inter state disputes and troubles inspite of the population being Hindu On the other hand the cry for Indianization instead of integrating the people at once repels them against each other The minorities become alienated and the different shades of Hindus become suspicious of each other and fearful of the domination by the so-called ideal type of Hindus and their customs

When Indianization implies the militant advocacy of any particular language on the lines of Hindi Hindu Hindusthan the immediate reaction of other linguistic groups would be that of rebellion The simple and obvious fact is that the demand of Indianization is already precipitating or would precipitate further disintegration and distrust among the various regions and groups it cannot be instrumental in resolving social tensions in India If religion were a cohesive force in the political field how were *world wars fought between the Christian countries twice in quick* succession ? How could one explain the major riots in North Ireland between the followers of the same religion ? Can we avoid all the distinctions between Hindus and Hindus as in the

5 M S Golwalkar *Bunch of Thoughts* P 115

case of Catholics and Protestants which they were not able to, so that an absolutely monolithic religion could be built up ? Is this at all a possibility in case of Hinduism which was evolved from various tribal sources and through centuries into a broad and tolerant faith

(d) *Pattern Maintenance* The social system should go on and for this purpose the various sub systems and groups should feel sufficient incentive and must get motivated to serve the common good of the totality In this respect the perspective of those who talk of Indianization is outmoded they go back to the past traditions of our culture in search of models of social organisation With the true revivalist nostalgia they yearn to introduce the *varna* system which at once initiates disaffection among many castes renewing hostile historical memories and disturbs the motivational requirements of corporate life Caste system based on heredity involves deep-rooted prejudices among many sections of that hierarchy The idea of divine birth and the immunities the glaring disparity of privileges and discriminatory justice associated with caste will not provide the necessary motivational force to hold the different sections of our people together in a national society Hence the belief among those who advocate Indianization regarding caste system as a model for organic integration of society would be not only of no use to the present it might prove fatal to the cause of the nation

Moreover according to this concept those who are born and brought up in India are not Indians in case they are members of the minority communities they must undergo a rebirth into Hindu culture then alone are they acceptable Thus the perverted notion of Indianization strikes at the very root of national consciousness by antagonising the overwhelming number of caste groups and denouncing all the minorities[6] How did we in India fail to face the invasions and conquests in the past say of the Mughals ? Did the fact of being Hindus make us unite to face the challenge at that time ? If it did not then we must search for the source of strength and unity not in religion but elsewhere

In view of all this one fails to see what the purpose of Indianization could be Accepting it at its face value we find that

6 See chapter on Golwalkarism

Brahmins who quoted past history against them In which even Sanskrit philology was used as a weapon The scheduled caste formulated their platform beginning with their role in the Koregoon battle and ending with the denunciation of Manu Smriti the so called social political code of Hindus [7]

Again the incapacity of wrong symbols to unite the people has been described in the following words There is a victory pillar near Poona raised by the English to commemorate their victory over Peshwas An eminent leader of the Harijans once addressed his caste brethren under the pillar He declared that the pillar was a symbol of the victory over the Brahmins as it was they who fought under the British and defeated the Pesh was the Brahmins [8] Having stated this the Brahmin writer continues How heart rending it is to hear an eminent leader thus describing the hated sign of slavery as an emblem of victory, and the despicable action of fighting as slaves of a foreigner against our own kith and kin as an achievement of glory [9]

Here is one who belongs to the caste of Peshwas a Brah min who wants to establish a *Hindu Rashtra* after the model of Shivaji s empire feeling pained at the Harijan leader s statement and in all probability genuinely What is interesting is his reference to our kith and kin No doubt the Peshwas were the kith and kin of the Golwalkars but can it be said *that they were the kith and kin of the Harijans?* Could that feeling arise in them under the Hindu tradition of the *varna* system of which Shri Golwalkar is a great advocate For all we know in the pre British days the Harijans in Poona streets were not allowed to step out of their huts during mornings and afternoons lest their shadows might fall upon the holy Brahmin In many parts of the country this was the case

In the same period of history diverse attitudes of Hindus and Muslims are very significant in Bengal While the Hindus offered thanks to the supreme disposer of events of this uni verse for having unexpectedly delivered this country from the long continued tyranny of its former rulers and placed it under

7 S A Dange *India from Private Communism to Slavery* P 9
8 Golwalkar *Bunch of Thoughts* Pp 110 111
9 *Ibid*

the Government of the British [10] and extended cooperation to the British the Muslim felt disheartened at the loss of indepen dence Here we have the British conquest symbolised in four different ways by four different groups To the Maharashtrian Brahmins it is heart rending because it was a Brahminical empire which was defeated by the British To the Harijans of Maha rashtra the same thing was victory and deliverance from Brahmi nical tyranny And to the Hindu (Brahmin) in Bengal it was a deliverance from the former Muslim rulers whereas to Muslims the same thing symbolised defeat and loss of independence

What made these four groups see different meanings in the same event is a question of perspective which is determined by their existential basis The Harijan in the context of the Hindu caste system was the most cruelly exploited and maltreated class of people and they would perceive good and bad from that point of view and so they found relief in the British rule The Chitpavan Brahmins under whose dynasty the Maratha empire had reached its highest point and afterwards declined to its fall and those who mourned the fallen glories of the Peshwas would naturally see something different To them it is not only defeat but also determination to go back to the olden days of greatness

It is significant that the ideology which was fathered and nurtured by a section of Maratha Brahmins and which had come down from such a historical background though presently transforming into a wider realm in the country by the name of the Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh has as its main flank the establishment of *Hindu Rashtra* on the lines of Shivaji s empire Shivaji is its most prominent hero It should be clear why Shri Golwalkar and the Maratha Harijan leaders cannot see the same meaning in the same monument

The same is the case with the communal approach of Hindus and Muslims The Muslims who had a sense of identi fication with the Mughal empire and were more patriotic felt bitter about the loss of independence when the British occupied the country whereas the Hindus of Bengal who were the rising

10 *History and Culture of Indian People* quoted from a memorandum presented by Raja Ram Mohan Roy Vol X P 12

new bureaucracy saw in it a new and favourable perspective, altogether different from that of the Muslims Similarly, dia metrically opposed reactions followed when Shivaji festivals were introduced into politics at the instance of the late Bal Gangadhar Tilak Patriotic fervour and fanaticism was roused among the Hindus whereas the same symbol had a chilling effect on the Muslims to whom Shivaji symbolised the downfall of the great Muslim empire

Some of the misgivings of that period among the Hindus and Muslims centred round Tilak s politics [11] The Shivaji cult in its modern phase as it is practised by the Shiv Sena demons trates how such regional and parochial symbols are atavistic and incapable of harnessing national consciousness In the minds of non Maharashtrian Hindus and minority communities that symbol today stands for hatred regional fanaticism and hostility It is evident that the revivalist idiom even when modern ideas are concealed in it would only help refresh the old memories of con flict separatism and hostility between various sections of India

This is particularly because of our past To this day it was a gradual process of loss of identity of tribes and groups and their absorption in an evolving society And at this time of our growth in the midst of science and technology when there is a real possibility of hastening those historical trends into a radical change and the emergence of a national society without the innumerable sectarian barriers any attempt to re establish past identities of various groups as though by a process of digging up their ancient and forgotten group consciousness would only mean atavism of the worst type For atavism in the context of mass communication and science and technology would be worst possible and difficult to eradicate

Revivalism in the background of Indian heterogeneity of culture even when initiated at the all India level would at once promote chain reactions at the regional and still lower levels resulting in a frantic search of one s own local cultural pedigree In fact the post independence period has seen this process in abundance The main characteristic of this is a sudden aware ness of one s great past rewriting of history a process of redis covering of heroes and heroines invocation songs and poems

11 R C Majumdar *History and Culture of People of India* Vol X Pt II P 478 See also T V Paravate *Bal Gangadhar Tilak* P 126

which roused regional pride and consciousness renaming of roads and parks and observance of great days from the history of the regions [12] These practices soon degenerate into regional ethnocentrism because such strong in group psychology must necessarily look for its out groups and scapegoats

Revivalist Trends Why ?

Revivalist trends began as a defence mechanism during the early British days and flourished during the post independence period in all directions Dr A R Desai lists ten such features in his able analysis of recent trends in Indian nationalism

1 Renaming of India as Bharat in tune with the old Hindu tradition

2 Attempt to evolve Sanskritized Hindi by eliminating any aroma of Muslim culture and discarding of the term Hindustani for Hindi

3 Selection of national symbols to resurrect certain cultural values of the pre Muslim past

4 Large scale popularization of religious and superstitious festivals and *melas* under the direct or indirect help of the State and also of the patronage of certain leaders of the ruling party

5 Efforts to organize Sadhu Samaj and make use of the most orthodox and consciously conservative section of the Hindu society as an agent of moral and social transformation

6 Exhortations of certain Congress ministers to introduce teaching of religion in educational institutions

7 Establishment of institutions academies cultural centres publication series art and aesthetic associations to emphasise values founded on revivalism

8 Broadcasting *bhajans* and devotional songs in the early morning programmes of the Radio

9 Participation by Congress leaders in communal caste and Hindu revivalist movements and also attempts to recast numerous traditions in religious moulds

10 The recent back to the Vedas and Gita approach of Acharya Vinoba Bhave Jai Prakash Narayan and many others [13]

Dr Desai has referred mostly to those areas of revivalism in which the ruling party or its associates are involved More

12 K K Gangadharan *The Shiv Sena Phenomenon* P 6

13 A R Desai *Recent Trends in Indian Nationalism* Pp 133 34

deliberate are the efforts of organisations like the R S S which regularly indoctrinate the youth with revivalist ideologies and make them observe festivals and occasions calculated to generate Hindu separatist consciousness in the younger generation

All these forces and processes have continuously prepared the ground for Indianization which is yet another name for the latest phase of revivalism in India The phenomenon of revivalism and its consequences may be outlined as follows

As the orthodox and traditional Indian society began changing there appeared resistance to change by those sections which had a vested interest in the old order In the background of the Hindu social structure and the position of the upper castes the opposition came from feudal and Brahminical stock This leadership with its traditional role spread the message of revivalism and provided a faulty perception to the ignorant and illiterate masses Thus even among the poorer and weaker sections of society a false consciousness was implanted by the traditionalist leadership by using revivalist and religious appeals For the conservative and orthodox sections revivalism served to preserve their position and also obstruct any change This essentially was in their interest In fact as Dr Desai has rightly observed the under developed capitalism in India instead of becoming a modernising force against superstitious customs and practices is trying to make use of those old values and institutions to create confusion and division among the common people so that the capitalist class can preserve their own status and also ward off the ever increasing demands of the working men which the weak capitalists in India are unable to meet[11] This juxtaposed with the truth that the demand for Indianization comes from parties and organisations of the Right will give the idea that behind the religious and patriotic mask of Indianization there is the stark economic truth that they represent a grotesque brand of feudal cum capitalist amalgam Secondly with the coming in of democratic institutions revivalism became an instrument of mass appeal Faulty reasoning and pseudo scientific approaches buttressed by religious sentiments are expected to yield good results A particular existential basis was exploited by a particular kind of leadership resulting in a revivalist type

of consciousness The consequences of revivalism for the Indian society may be summed up as follows

1 Caste consciousness—rivalry and hostility—when the historical background of different castes are brought up to the level of consciousness of one time exploiters and the exploited

2. Hindu Muslim tension and Muslim alienation as a sequel to dubbing them un Indian

3 Inter regional conflicts depending upon various factors such as

(a) The caste composition and dominance of the regions
(b) Political parties of the region with regard to their agree ability or hostility to Indianization
(c) Aryan or Dravidian culture complex of the region
(d) The degree of modernity and tradition among the people of the region

The net balance of Indianization would be devastating in all directions except that it rouses fanaticism among a small section of Hindus and makes them activists The rest of the results would be adverse to the community We have already se n how differently four different sections of our p-ople looked upon British conquest and how they perceived patriotism in relation to that situation It should be clear that there is nothing like absolute patriotism it depends upon one s position in society and how one conceptualises the situation Ultimately it is the nature of the social system which makes man patriotic because it is the system which provides him his position and also a sense of identification and involvement with the nation

A highly fragmented society of self sufficient villages and separate caste groups did not produce any patriotism This was proved by the behaviour of the Indians in the past This has b en observed by many including Lord Clive who had said if they had any inclination to destroy the Europeans they might have done it with sticks and stones And yet when under the British rule the system changed and the country came under a uniform law and administration mobility increased and isolation ended and we found for the first time a nation and national patriotism appear ing This must make us learn the lesson that if any section of the people are to be made patriotic it is not by Indianization but by giving such people the opportunity and self-confidence to feel involved in the affairs of the nation that they can be so converted

CHAPTER II

Renaissance and Revivalism

Confrontation The Rise of Ideologies

Indian revivalism has its roots in India s Renaissance And the current plea for Indianization is nothing but a variant of revivalism which has been co-existing with the renaissance ever since it dawned upon the shores of India As an ideology it must be traced to the existential factors from where it originates

It is necessary to have a glimpse of the historical and social background of the Indian Renaissance to grasp the pernicious doctrine of *Back to Vedas* and other moves of that period For this one must recapture the Indian social scene subsequent to the arrival of the West particularly the British and the revolutionary social changes that followed India s time old static society with its long existent and well known triad of joint family village and caste had never conceded a real structural change during the known past this was so despite wars and conquests and changing dynasties of any number

The British when they came to India were armed with three drastic weapons of change—a modern government Christianity and the Industrial civilization For a country which was predominantly rural and had hardly any central authority except in matters of collecting taxes and waging wars a modern government was something very radical and far reaching For Hinduism too despite its known tolerance and

past achievements Christianity was a tough contender, particularly against the outmoded customs and institutions And to the industrial civilisation with its capitalistic organisation the feudal Indian culture was no match Thus under the magic wand of the West India stood spellbound Though only a matter of historical accident the role of Britain was to bring about the destruction of the feudal social order of India and to build in its place a capitalist order This process was of course, made complicated by the fact that Britain was a foreign imperialist power in India Her colonial and exploitative designs and her strategic necessity of administering an alien land of multitudes of varying religions and social strata did not naturally permit her to transform the feudal order into full fledged capitalism However this transition from feudalism to capitalism with the accompanying clash of interests among the diametrically opposed groups was the existential basis out of which most of the modern ideologies in India have grown The modern Indian nationalism reformism prolitarianism liberalism radicalism, terrorism and not the least of all the contemporary Indian revivalism are rooted in the social processes that were generated with the advent of the British in India

Ideology and Society

What was the nature of these social processes that produced so many ideologies and what were those specific situations out of which such ideologies sprang up ? To know this we must at least briefly examine the nature of ideologies and how they are related to the social milieu Marx argued that men s beliefs (consciousness or ideas) reflected their material conditions and experiences and these in turn were the result of their roles in the society and above all their roles in the economic system But although he took a broadly determinist position Marx recog nised the great complexity of the problem and that ideologies do not stem in any simple way from a person s objective loca tion in society He recognised for example that some members of the proletariat accept the ideology of the bourgeoisie—a phenomenon that Engels described as false consciousness He also recognized that ideas once born have a certain autonomy and may persist in a society long after the material circumstances

from which they have derived have changed [1] And a later writer Karl Mannheim held the view that all ideas including truths are bound to location He declared that there is an existentially determined truth content in human thought at every stage of its development [2] Various viewpoints or perspectives according to him express the aspirations of different groups in society and it should be possible to correlate such viewpoints to structural (class positions etc) and historical positions Therefore in the light of sociology of knowledge it may be possible to understand the various ideologies and beliefs that germinated during the Indian renaissance The prerequisite to such an analysis is to have a bird's-eye view of the social processes that were shaping during this period

In the long history of India there were upheavals and and revolutions but none were equivalent to the British impact Most of the past changes were of a religious nature for instance at the time when Brahminism became decadent Buddhism arose and when the latter declined Sankaracharya made a vigorous attempt to resurrect Hinduism Then there was the Islamic impact followed by the Bhakti cult with a view to synthesizing the various religions into a common brotherhood Commenting on these developments of the past D P Mukerjee observed the mystic revolution in the absence of a fundamental change in the Indian social economy was bound to be a minor revolution With the British rule the very basis of the Indian social economy has been changed [3] The British rule did not change the social structure of India all of a sudden however within a few decades things began to move

Power Status and Role

The status organisation in pre British India was of a dual character One may be described as the temporal power structure headed by the king followed by his subordinates or chieftains who had their way over a large number of villages and who collected taxes from villages and transmitted a portion to the king after appropriating their own shares Then came the

1 Stephen Cotgrove *The Science of Society* Pp 185 [illegible]
2 K Mannheim *Essay in Sociology of Knowledge* P 176
3 D P Mukerjee *Modern Indian Culture* P 28

village heads followed by the common cultivators and lastly the serfs The other hierarchy was that of caste

Both the hierarchies often when they reached the village level were mutually overlapping The villages were self ruled collectivist communities holding common land They had their own common functionaries who were in the service of the community There was hardly any interference from the king in the village affairs Mostly the social life was under the discipline of caste and joint families while the common interest of the community was looked after by the village councils Thus self regulating and self perpetuating village community was the real preserver and maintainer of India s traditional social structure

It is here that the British impact struck heavily by introducing private ownership of land zamindari levying of taxes from individuals and commercialization of agriculture when market oriented production began in place of the old pattern of production for the need of the respective village Inroads of machine made goods from England at the first instance completely smashed the handicraft industry and threw thousands of artisans out of employment These material changes were enough to shake the very foundation of the status and role structure of the society But much more was to come in the shape of administrative measures

With the introduction of uniform legislation the discriminatory system of punishment which was varying in terms of place and religion was struck off This along with independent judiciary acceptance of notions of personal liberty and equality and abolition of slavery were measures destructive of feudal order At this distance of time one can only imagine what must have been the feeling of loss of power and status among the upper strata of the society which had accepted their god ordained and irrevocable high status as taken for granted and had been used to treating men of lower castes and ranks almost the way they dealt with their cattle A certain psychological effect may have been produced by the equality of civil rights secured by British law and by distinctions of caste being ignored by the courts of justice in British India There is no difference between sweeper and Brahmin the latter of whom has been deprived of the

immunity from capital punishment which he once enjoyed under Hindu rulers [4]

The ego shrinkage and frustration of the upper class evident in the statement that when sued by a mean labourer or a male or female servant you are summoned without investigation to attend to their court and are thus dishonoured and degraded [5] This is how the proclamation issued at Azamgarh during the revolt of 1857 referred to this sensitive issue Similarly the status image in the minds of slave owners is bound to be disturbed by the abolition of slavery According to estimates there were about 8 to 9 million slaves in the country during 1841 What would have been the impact of restoring liberty to these millions and how the ego of slave-owning families must have been hurt when they lost that pride of mastery over men and women is not difficult to understand The change in the structure of status and role must have been very sharp

Meanwhile continuous process of destruction and regeneration of classes and occupations were on While the changes that affected the rural life destroyed the agricultural middle class the inroads of foreign made goods almost ruined the artisan class in urban areas There were also officers and men of army of former chieftains who lost their roles after the establishment of law and order by the British At the same time as though on the ruins of the former arose the new middle class—the government servants and those of the liberal professions traders and merchants Thus out of the western educated section of this middle class the new leadership came into existence

This was a radical change from the past It was members of this class who manned the modern and expanding bureaucracy in India [6]

Yet another status strain felt by the tradition minded Indians was at the hands of the bureaucracy the proceedings of which were personal formal and in accordance with the principles of equality of all citizens in the eyes of law This must

4 L. S S O'melly *Modern India and the West* P 370

5 R. C Majumdar *History and Culture of Indian People* Vol IX P 473

6 See A R Desai *Social Background of Indian Nationalism* Also N V Sovani *British Impact on India* (*Studies in the Cultural History of India*)

have been revolting to the erstwhile privileged sections of the community who were steeped in the feudal cum caste traditions and were accustomed to the recognition of personal status and dignity at the hands of former kings and their government Thus a static society which for centuries together had not known any significant internal change became rather abruptly mobile and dynamic The advent of vertical mobility brought about significant change in the real status of various groups and tilted the established status and rank order at different levels of social hierarchy This substantial social context of change in course of time was bound to produce new ideologies and reactions which we shall take up later

The material changes that disorganised the self sufficient village communities and the dynamism that affected the status structure of caste and class in India was accompanied by yet another set of changes in another traditional and vital sector namely the joint family Since ages family has been one of the strongest citadels of orthodoxy in India it was a focal point into which crude and superstitious customs of caste and religion were projected and through a process of blind repetition of outmoded rites and rituals it went on perpetuating itself for centuries together The feudal patriarchal family completely suppressed the women and children to such an extent that in the presence of the grand father children were not allowed to sit in the lap of their father and wives were not allowed to talk to their husbands during day time Inhuman practices of *Sati* female infanticide child marriage and purdah were the burden of at least fifty percent of the Hindus who normally happened to be women This is particularly true in those areas where such customs were in vogue Opposition to these practices and abolition of them greatly redeemed the status of women More than anything else education in general and female education in particular was the greatest liberating force and a grave threat to conservativism No wonder that the upper castes did not send their children to schools started earlier they had to contend with children of low castes and of menials It was significant that the orthodox among the Indians were very much opposed to female education while the enlightened and great men like Pundit Isvar Chandra Vidyasagar and Raja Ram Mohan Roy were advocating the cause

Through such unprecedented changes the power status and role of different strata of Indian society underwent revolutionary changes many of the vested interests with their deeply entrenched positions were shaken many new groups were catapulted into higher positions and the status of women got raised One of the major aspects of this transformation was that the traditionally orthodox elements had a sense of loss of power and felt humiliated and aggrieved The humiliation was enhanced when such upper classes were maltreated by the British The rule that every native whatever his pretended rank may be ought to be compelled under heavy penalties to *salaam* all English gentlemen in the streets and if the native is on horse back or in a carriage to dismount and stand in a respectful attitude until the European has passed him [7] was not only an order of a magistrate at Agra but was an unwritten law all over British India

The Impact and its Outcome

There were provocative confrontations of ideas and debates on religion which were to lay the foundation of ideological conflicts later in this field Conjoined with this there was the new culture with the modern means of communication the industries and specially printing press It is well known that the railways notwithstanding their role in promoting the concept of nation and national institutions by expediting travel between distant places were often understood as a deliberate British device to promote their business and imperialist interest of domination So also was their introduction understood as a deliberate attempt to interfere with caste and religious susceptibilities of people for it was during railway travel that they were compelled by circumstances to give up such customs like untouchability and pollution The printing press played a much more vital role not only did it print and publicise books and newspapers and popularize knowledge for the first time in Indian history it also added new dimension of critical and self introspective thinking among the literate sections Thus arguments and counter arguments discussions and debates on various prablems that emerged out of the British impact had become the order of the day This

7 R C Majumdar *Op Cit* Vol X Part I P 417

was the origin of public opinion in India So also did public in the sense of reading public supporting or opposing public come into existence Vital issues of the time such as abolition of burning of widows killing of female children introduction of widow remarriage and a host of Hindu religious customs and thoughts were the preoccupation of many tracts and newspapers in those days This was the process of making people conscious of issues involved in their day to day life and also the beginning of ideological difference

It is widely recognised that education has two distinct functions to perform The first is to perpetuate the existing culture and its techniques ideas ideals standards values and institutions Secondly education should also be an instrument of change and adaptation without being merely repetitive and reproductive of the past However the traditional Indian education was not dynamic it was mainly oriented towards perpetuating unquestioning obedience to the conservative social order and its time old customs and beliefs

Dealing with the Hindu intellectual approach Nirad C Chaudhuri makes the following observations First an air of secrecy and esotericism never left the Hindu pursuit of knowledge and at times this became grotesque Secondly it became institutional for the attribution of supernatural authority to the Vedas and inspired sages was ultimately to be traced to a belief in hunches in preference to rational enquiry Lastly it became the monopoly of special class of persons who could exclude and include others in this class quite arbitrarily because the Hindus also formulated the auxiliary theory that some men were capable of knowledge and others were not and this could only be decided by the Guru or preceptor Any person who claimed to have it on the strength of personal enquiry was regarded as a pretender and even worse as an imposter [8]

As against this position of authoritarian restrictive and self revealed type of knowledge which in its later phase had degenerated to cramming verses and scriptures and quoting authorities the modern English education appeared on the scene

The impact of Mill Voltaire Locke Bacon Hume Paine Godwin Comte Kant Hegel and Bentham was indeed

8 Nirad C Chaudhuri *The Intellectual in India*, p 48-49

College gave up old religious customs and ideas and deliberately adopted the practice of eating beef and drinking wine Enthused by the Western impact some of the newly educated ones behaved in strange ways they thought and conducted themselves like the Europeans and denounced everything Indian There were demands from the public to expel the students who did not strictly adhere to ancestral customs and beliefs The magistrates were urged to punish those students who did not observe the orthodox rules and practices[10]

Not only were the iconoclast opposed to the religious authority and tradition the only worry of the conservative sections but the abolition of *sati* disrespect to the institution of *purdah* and caste system in public places were also giving headache to them The legal right of inheritance granted to converts by the British authorities and widow remarriage act were also looked upon as deliberate attack on and interference with Hinduism Moreover the religious reform that Raja Ram Mohan Roy started was against idolatory and the concept of transmigra tion He opposed *sati* polygamy evils of the caste system and favoured widow remarriage His was no doubt a church very much influenced by the Christian teachings while believing that the ancient *Vedanta* is self sufficient in theology he clearly recog nised the ethical supremacy of Jesus And more so his successor Keshab Chandra Sen was inclined towards Christianity[11] This type of social and religious reforms undertaken by the leaders of the Brahmo Samaj was not to the liking of the orthodox Hindus The trust deed of Brahmo Samaj declared promotion of charity morality piety benevolence virtue and strengthening the bonds of union between men of all religious persuasions and creeds[12] as their objective Naturally all these revolutionary changes were not to the liking of the *pundits* and the orthodox and the obvious corollary was an automatic defence of every thing Indian

Reaction to Change

The impact of such a change as outlined above was natu rally not uniform upon all sections of society Consequently

10 *Ibid* P 91
11 J N Farquhar *Modern Religious Movements in India* P 60
12 Quoted by Farquhar P [illegible]

human reaction to this process was also not uniform People s perception good or bad in a situation depends upon how it affects them There were of course a lot of people who were adversely affected by the change The upper castes who lost their caste privileges before the court of law feudal elements who resented equality the pandits and priests who opposed the aboli tion of outmoded customs and practices those who felt and resented the loss of monopoly of learning and wisdom when education was liberalized so as to be within the reach of low castes and women and all those who lost power and prestige were bound to perceive the new developments as undesirable and in fact they did so Confronted with the task of defending the various *aspects of the old order they developed a defence mechanism* which incorporated the newly learned technique of propaganda and even the sentiment of nationalism This broadly grew into an ideology of revivalism with its imagined greatness of the past and the motivational force in the desire to re-establish the past The impact situation provided certain specific facilitating factors for the development and nurture of this ideology

(1) Absurd Rationali ation The Western impact and education introduced an evergrowing gulf between the traditional social institutional life and the newly acquired rational and intellectual outlook Such a gap between life and thought is an unbearable situation which might if not remedied lead to mass schizophrenia Thus people placed in this situation would normally try to get over their sense of guilt or a continuous *process of self accusation which is bound to arise in that dialectic* of backward institutions and forward intellect. The escape from this predicament is obviously to fill in the gap that is to rationa lize one s traditional culture and its institutional values in the manner apparently satisfactory to the newly acquired Western standard of evaluation even if it were pseudo-scientific standards The other alternative is to change one s day to day life by moving against the time-old and irrational customs and practices of society which indeed must have been a tough task for many Therefore a good section of Western educated persons resorted to rationalization and self defence of one s culture with the result that they went on feeding the revivalist mill

The absurdity of defending an untenable position led the Hindu revivalists to the point of claiming that all

modern science and technology had its origin in their scriptures And some of them indulged in scientific rationalization of Hindu customs and practices Pundit Sasadhar Tarka Chudamani (1840 1928) maintained that Hindu religious practices surcharged the body with electricity from the atmosphere and the earth one upward and one downward The tuft of long hair at the back of orthodox Hindu s head enables him to purify and invigorate his mind by helping the passage of these electrical currents through his body[13] The position of Dayanand was not much different By most incredible interpretations of the Vedas he succeeded in persuading himself and others that everything worth knowing even the most recent inventions of modern science were alluded to in the Vedas steam engines railways and steam boats all were shown to have been known at least in their germs to the poets of the Vedas[14] Such delusions of grandeur became a sort of revivalist folklore in India the theme of which was that the West had come to know science from India by stealthily taking away our ancient works of science we had even aeroplanes long b fore the West invented it Don't we know that Sita was brought back from *lanka* by a *Pushpak Viman*? To this day this line of argument is not dead in India There are even science teachers who believe that we knew not only all about missiles but also how to retrieve them This is obviously mythology in the physics laboratory Notwithstanding the false pride injected into an ignorant and illiterate people and its political function the effect of it was to create an ideology of looking backward glorifying and justifying everything of that past

(2) *Under the Mask of Blind Imitation* Under the initial impact of the West there were as we have mentioned already some people who were off their feet and behaved as if they were complete aliens in their own country they condemned every thing Indian and Hindu and some of the early educated and respectable people even got converted to Christianity This brought about a strong self defence mechanism among the orthodox and not so orthodox The former began to put up a blind defence of everything Indian And for those who were aggrieved

13 J Sarkar *India through the Ages* P 122
14 Max Mueller *Biographical Essays* P 1.0

by the change such a defence could be a respectful mask, atleast a partial cover for expressing their resentment on account of losing their status and power, it meant hostility towards the new class

(3) *Anti Reformism* Influenced by the West there was yet another pattern of response rationalistic and reformistic in nature and broadly in favour of change and adjustment but without totally denouncing everything Indian Raja Ram Mohan Roy Dwarka Nath Tagore, Keshab Chandra Sen Ranade Gokhale and others were the pioneers of this line Though Ram Mohan Roy with all his liberal and rationalist outlook in his earlier days believed in the infallibility of Vedas yet when he wrote about the purity of monotheistic doctrine as in the Upanishads there was intense and wide spread agitation in Indian society The whole of Calcutta was strongly agitated over the rise of Reformist Party under Raja Ram Mohan Roy People of all classes, castes and shades of opinion took part in the great controversy and the number was certainly against Raja Ram Mohan Roy who had more than a fair share of abuses and ridicule and even threats of personal violence The agitation gradually spread into the interior and the entire Hindu society was convulsed in a manner to which there was no parallel within the living memory [15] Inspite of such opposition the reformist ideology of the Brahmo Samaj flourished with the growth of rational thinking Under the leadership of Dwarka Nath Tagore the Samaj gave up the doctrine of infallibility of Vedas Later under the inspiring leadership of Keshab Chandra Sen application of reason to religious matters and advocacy of social reforms such as female education widow re marriage inter caste marriage and removal of purdah became articles of faith The Civil Marriage Act of 1872 made it possible to have legal marriage in disregard of caste or creed and this was considered as personal triumph of Keshab Chandra All these reforms were looked upon by the orthodox as un Indian and 'a Hindu The revivalism received further fillip as a reaction to social reform

(4) *Dogmatism is Self defence* Perhaps never before was Hinduism called upon to defend itself as it was forced to by

15 R. C Majumdar *Op Cit* Vol X Part II P 100

the circumstances of the impact situation with the advent of the British The attack from without and within almost forced the orthodox Hindus to defend themselves in a strange manner *It is obvious that strong defence would require strong ideological* backing and would often compel people to rationalize one s customs and institutions However Hinduism was no doctrinaire religion There is no Christ no Bible not even an exclusively reserved heaven or hell for any set of believers Hinduism believes in the universality of God s love and grace and of man s salvation Such a religion cannot provide the ideological fervour for fanatical defence of anything including itself Hence we find the exigencies of a religious self defence mechanism and also probably inspired by the Christian and Islamic models the rise of a dogma of infallibility of scriptural authority within the Hindu fold

Arya Samaj of Dayanand inspite of its progressive social outlook in the field of caste and other aspects was an assertion of infallibility of the Vedas and a plea to go back to the Vedas While it got engaged in a furious combat against Islam and Christianity it was dragging Hinduism to the level of those religions not only in matters of practice but also in certain aspects of ideology It may be recalled that Dayanand Saraswati advocated even the obnoxious practice of *Niyoga* (calling upon someone else to procreate children through one s own wife) on the basis of scriptural authority There were others who defended everything belonging to the past Bankim Chandra Chatterjee s work the biography of Lord Krishna was a rejoinder to the criticism of Christian missionaries on Krishna s amours with cowherd girls and it was in defence of everything that Krishna did[16] Similarly Smartas the followers of Sankara declared that the whole of the ritualist system of Hinduism comes from God that every detail of it is right the decline of India is the direct outcome of the neglect of these rules that recovery must be effected not by further doses of Protestant revolt but by the persistent and patient endeavour to observe the functions and precepts of the ancient Dharma in its entirety[17] The reference to Protestant revolt is obviously to the reforms

16 *Ibid* P 136

17 Farquhar *Modern Religious Movements in India* P 309

initiated by Brahmo Samaj and others

(5) *Greatness Misused* Yet another ingredient to the ego expansiveness in this direction came from the Western orientalists who discovered the amazing richness and versatility of Sanskrit language and literature and were thrilled by the vision of a great civilization unfolded through it Hodgson s discovery of literature of Buddhism Roth s history of Vedas Max Muller s text of Rigveda literary contributions of William Jones Cunningham s revelation of Indian art epigraphy and archaeology and many more contributions including the excava tion of Indus Valley Civilization provided a proud self image for Indians as inheritors of an unbroken history and civilization of 3 000 years This knowledge when popularised through the English education laid the foundation of national consciousness and the people became for the first time aware of their history and national culture The orthodox elements exploited this new pride for the furtherance of revivalist ideologies by overburden ing the masses with the past at the cost of the present and the future

(6) *Scapegoatism* An auxiliary belief along with faith in the grandeur and glorification of the past was the view that the loss of character and greatness of Hindus was due to the Muslim rule The implication in this context of the greatness of the past and the degeneration of the present apparently constitutes an appeal to resurrect the past

(7) *Testimonials and Reality* We in India often attach great importance to testimonials from the West this has been the disposition of the people in India since long And people in the midst of a religious self defence would naturally cling to any straw in support of their survival This was the case when India went whole heartedly for the Theosophical Society and its leaders Madam Blavatsky and Dr Mrs Annie Beasant who were stout defenders of almost all Hindu customs and institutions like caste system polytheism image worship and the theory of reincarnation which were all subjected to criticism by enlightened Hindus themselves Madam Blavatsky also claimed that Mahatmas adept in occultism still lived in the inaccessible areas of the Himalayas and guided the destinies of mankind by their soul force and also maintained that such Mahatmas exhibi ted their astral bodies to her and she received messages

from them[18] This and her fantastic jugglenes of occultism and equally fantastic theory of reincarnation by which she claimed Jesus was the wife of Emperor of Southern India in the year 13 500 B C and later father of Julius Caesar and T Subba Rao were all to the liking of Indians[19] Such stark superstitions and jugglenes had indeed immense testimonial value to the orthodox Hindu who now found that even the Westerners were in support of his religious myth Apart from orientalist Max Muller who called us a nation of philosophers Williams and Jones the praise came from far off quarters For instance the misogynist German philosopher Schopenhauer declared that the Vedas were the fruit of highest human knowledge and wisdom and went on to predict that In India our religion will never take root on the contrary Indian philosophy will produce a fundamental change in our knowledge and thought [20] It is regarding such lavish comments that Prof D P Mukerjee said that These scholars and lovers of India s past claimed more than even the *Rishis* dared Their panegyrics became the stock in trade of all the nationalist obscurantists in search of self respect [21] This was yet another feather in the cap of revivalism in India

Revivalism From Swaraj to Hindu Raj

It is clear that all these developments had an undertone or even overtone of national sentiment or at least Hindu nationalist sentiment Often this perspective developed as a function of the then prevailing political and social situation In fact one could see the distinct growth of two broad perspectives One which is narrowly patriotic and in defence of the old order aspiring to go back and reclaim the past and still using the outfits of modern civilization in varying degrees while firmly rooted in feudal and religious grounds In fact there were great men like *Swami Vivekanand who combined both radical* and revivalist outlooks

18 R C Majumdar Op Cit Vol X, P 133

19 Farquhar P 275

20 Schopenhauer *The World as Will and Idea* quoted by Shanker Ghose in *Renaissance to Militant Indian Nationalism* P 67

21 D P Mukerjee, *Diversities* P 175

On the other side were those broadly liberal, patriotic and understanding, reformistic and in favour of modernization of culture and society gradually developing into capitalistic and secular mould

However religious nationalism seems to have got an upper hand for sometime and in the heat of nationalist fervour Hindu religion appeared in the garb of nationalism and patriotism became communal Whatever may be the inspiration of Hinduism as a religious creed the educated Hindu made it a rallying symbol for political unity The aspiration for self government arrested all movements for social reform which the early impulse towards liberalism had called forth among the educated Hindus Past history was ransacked for new political formulas and by a natural and inevitable process nationality and patriotism began to be associated with Hinduism ' *

The revivalist school was present in two major regions of British cultural contact in India namely Bengal and Maharashtra It has been said that unlike in Bengal the militant nationalism in Maharashtra was not in religious garb Though the number and quality of writers from Bengal were decidedly more impressive and they were more religious and philosophical in tone we shall see that this is not exactly true Let us examine some typical examples In Bengal Raj Narain Bose who proclaimed the superiority of Hindu religion and culture over European and Christian theology and civilization and founded the Nationality Promotion Society did talk of Hindu medicine and Hindu *materia medica* Among many other things he also tried to insulate the Hindu against Western etiquette and manners This trend developed further when Nabagopal Mitra started the institution of Hindu Mela which among other cultural activities organized discourses on the superiority of Hinduism The national paper the organ of the Mela propogated the idea that Hindus were a nation by themselves Nabagopal also held the view that Hindus were destined to be a religious nation More or less the same was the position of Arya Samaj It wanted to establish a Hindu nation by establishing a common religion and culture in India by converting others to Hinduism through the *Shuddhi* (conversion) movement

* *Selected Writings and Speeches* Maulana Mohamed Ali Pp 69 70

Similar was the case with Bankim Chandra Most of his plots deal with Hindu Muslim fights and he does not hide the fact that his nationalism was Hindu rather than Indian[23]

However the most powerful advocate of Hindu nationalism and also revivalism was Swami Vivekanand who earnestly believed that the time had come for the Hindus to conquer the whole world with their Vedantic thought and religion He also believed that India alone had a spiritual message whereas the West was steeped in the depth of sensuality Up India and conquer the world with your spirituality[24] he declared His revivalism and activism is unique in the sense that he was also radical in his approach He opposed almost everything normally associated with Hinduism and asserted Who cares for your Bhakti and Mukti ? Who cares what your scriptures say ? I will go into a thousand hells cheerfully if I can rouse my countrymen immersed in *Tamas* to stand on their feet and be men inspired with the spirit of *Karma Yoga* This line of revivalist activism continued through the leadership of Aurobindo Ghose and B C Pal in Bengal and through Tilak and his associates in Maharashtra But it cannot be said that all of them shared the radicalism of Vivekananda At least Tilak did not The deterioration of Hindu revivalism into Hindu communalism was a matter of time

Militant nationalism in Maharashtra centres round the controversial personality of Bal Gangadhar Tilak His religious and political attitudes can be judged from some of his crucial conduct in relation to issues of socio political nature Tilak was the strongest opponent of the Age of Consent Act of 1891 which prohibited consummation of marriage before the wife had reached the age of twelve while the enlightened public opinion in India was all for it He sided with the Sanskrit pundits and other orthodox elements of Poona and opposed Hindu woman s right to stay away from her husband According to his most sympathetic biographer s admission he carried on an incessant campaign against Mr Malabari (a Parsi social reformer who opposed child marriage) and the social reformers Tilak s theoretical stand was that society had a right to arraign offenders against its time honoured customs and traditions and if any change had to be

23 R C Majumdar *Op Cit* Vol X Part I P 90
24 *Speeches and Writings of Swami Vivekananda* II 600

brought about in them it should be brought about with the sanction of religious leaders [25] If such were his views on social matters his patriotism was equally rooted in religion Either he sincerely believed in what he was proposing or perhaps as a strategy he decided to exploit the religious sentiments of the people in the cause of freedom A sympathetic writer says that it wss Tilak who first stood out for the concept of harnessing social prejudices to the cause of national independence and applied his considerable talent to strengthening these prejudices [26] In many cases he came forward as a champion of Hinduism Commenting on this the author of Indian unrest Sir Valentine *Chirol had referred to* Tilak s onslaught in Poona upon Ranade his alliance with the bigots of orthodoxy his appeal to popular superstitions in the new Ganapati celebrations the racial fanaticism in the anti-cow killing movements to the Maratha sentiment in the cult which he introduced of Shivaji [27]

Even though such comments were treated as unsympathetic during British time they deserve to be considered afresh today In fact an eminent Indian historian admits even at the very *beginning the introduction of Shivaji festival and Ganapati* celebrations instead of uniting the people against the British had the opposite effect of splitting the Muslims from Hindus [28]

The Hindu communal patriot sprang into existence with swaraj as his war cry He refuses to give quarter to the Muslim unless latter quietly shuffles off his individuality and becomes completely Hinduised [29] was a typical comment which characterised the reality of the situation Whatever might have been the *value of such symbolism in the past today* in the context of our federal republic Shivaji cult does not even remain Hindu revivalism but degenerates into regional jingoism and an anachronism of the worst possible type In this context a contemporary Maharashtrian writer s observation deserves attention In the hundred years or so Shivaji—the symbol of the rise of Maratha power—has become a great motivative force to Maharashtrians whenever they

25 J V Parvate *Bal Gangadhar Tilak* P 44
26 Natrajan *Century of Social Reform* P 65
27 V Chirol quoted by Parvate P 40
28 R. C Majumdar Vol X Part II Pp 477 78
29 *Selected Writings and Speeches of Mohammed Ali* P 70

have had acute attacks of persecution mania or depressive fits It has always helped to revive their grand dream of power

There is something dangerously infantile and regressive in this atavism It means that Maharashtrians like most other Indians everywhere have lost the capacity to rationally face the present and the future It is a difficult subject Anyone trying to say so is likely to be accused of being a traitor an alien The crowd will tear him apart for having touched them on their most sensitive point But the only hope for a return to relative sanity lies in analysing the pshchology of an entire society its culture and its historical conditioning which becomes a handicap in its future progress [30] It is evident that such parochial and religious symbolisms in the present instead of doing good will only harm the nation

Tilak s ringing phrase freedom is our birth right has been instrumental in activising politics in India However, from a wider perspective and from the viewpoint of future Prof D P Mukerjee has expressed the view that once the birth right is accepted independence becomes necessary because it is the land of birth and from this point of view Hindu has the first lien on it The shift according to him towards Hindu Mahasabha politics is a matter of drawing the right corollary Above all it is anti intellectual in being grounded upon emotions of the dispossessed and the debarred Birth rights always give strength to the first national movement of colonial people but in the later stages of any such struggle it veers towards Fascism and all that it means The roots of German and Italian Fascism are to be found in the anti intellectual romantic movements [31]

If we take a close look at RSS ideology of today with their concept of *Matribhumi Pitribhumi Karmabhumi* and *Punyabhumi* and their anti intellectualism and romanticism we cannot but see that the tradition of militant Hindu nationalism from Tilak to Golwalkar and through Savarkar is a continuum, and no wonder that RSS is a great admirer of not only Shivaji but also Tilak and many other symbols of this nature Prof D P Mukeriee who gave expression to the above views in his book published in July 1942 went on to make a prophetic statement

30 Dilip Chitre Rise of the third Shivaji *Hindustan Times* 28 2 1969
31 D P Mukerjee *Modern Indian Culture* P 57

when he said what we feel is that if it (idea of birth right) is born its subsequent philosopher will legitimately seek for its progenitors among those who believed in freedom as a birth right and in nothing else The seeds of a cheap raciology are in that outlook [32] This was a prediction made 28 years ago and for all the world to see the demand for Indianization has proved its validity because Indianization implies denial of nationality to all those whose progenitors did not share the ideology of militant Hindu nationalism in the past

To sum up we may conclude that the Indian renaissance by its very nature generated revivalism A foreign government pandering to the Hindu superstitious customs and strengthening those obscurantist forces the failure to develop scientific outlook due to absence of governmental encouragement and also because of the slow progress of industry and technology the development of national consciousness as a result of foreign occupation and administration discovery of Indian culture and the subsequent exaggeration of self pride were all exploited by classes resistant to change to convert nationalism into communalism and knowledge of cultural heritage into ethnocentrism Thus the Weltanschuung that emerged out of Indian renaissance was revivalism in the main rather than an onward looking world view of modernity This had to be so because of the misdirection given to the historical processes by the leadership of the orthodox section who did not want to change over to an open society and who cut themselves away from the traditional moorings of a feudal order Thus revivalism was the ideological weapon of a class of counter revolutionaries against change in this case change from feudalism to capitalism

32 *Ibid* P 58

CHAPTER III

Historical and Cultural Models of Indianization

(A) Ideology and Social Movements

The core of the social reform movement which began during the time of Raja Ram Mohan Roy was a new ideology intimately related to the changing social structure and Western education The process of change was partial and the old society and its social forces were very much alive This dualism of the changing and unchanging society provided the existential basis for two diametrically opposed ideologies When the ideology of change began to express itself in the from of social reform movement the reaction expressed itself strongly in the form of an anti reform movement Like all other ideologies revivalism also provides strong motivational force for social movements or to be more appropriate anti social movements Some of the advocates of orthodoxy though educated were expressing the representative views of that section of society which was reluctant to change And as an antidote to reform they turn d back to the Hindu traditions and took to not only blindly justifying outmoded customs and practices but also preaching revivalism of all kinds Thus the ideology of Indian revivalism [illegible] a set of related ideas was the mainspring of the anti reform movement and [illegible] continues to be so even to this day when it has assumed the name of Indianization and [illegible] well supported by an all India party and a huge volunteer core

A social movement represents an effort by a large number of people to solve collectively a problem that they feel they have in common [1] This really means the people must necessarily have an understanding of their problem Such an understanding perspective or ideology is the inspiring force behind any social movement We have already seen that perspectives are bound to a location and intimately correlated with the existential basis Who they are at what point of history they exist and what position they hold in status hierarchy are important in the formulation of perspectives of people involved in social movements There fore to understand and appreciate the social movements whether they are reform movements or revivalist movements one must be able to relate the ideology of such movements with the existential factors of the people who are drawn into those move ments One s belongingness to a definite existential basis creates a certain predisposition to look at issues

We have already pointed out that the society which was changing as a result of British contact did have a large number of people who did not look upon the change favourably often because such changes were injurious to the traditionally privile ged and status holding sections The second implication of the approach is that such feeling and predisposition of any section of people have to be expressed and a consciousness about the same has to be built up That too was done by the revivalist leadership in the past Thus the ideology was born The third implication was that such a perception would normally lead to the suggestion as to how the problem can be solved This is how social movements are born when ideologies are translated into group activity In the past we had such movements in the Hindu Mela of Bengal Shivaji festivals and cult founded by Bal Gangadhar Tilak in Maharashtra the Sanatan Dharma Sabha in North India the anti cow killing movem nts and the all India Shuddhi Sabha and other innumerable big and small attempts which were all expressions of the same backward look ing revivalistic outlook This trend became more complica ed when one time revolutionaries and respectable names like Aurobindo Ghose and Savarkar later superimposed their courage and patriotism with religion and sentimental outbursts of Hindu

1 Hans Toch *The Social Psychology of Social Movement* p 5

several such model movements of Indianization which were in spired and conducted by the ideological predecessors of the *present move To the exposition of Indianization and for* the correct appreciation of the vested interest it is necessary that we cite some such example from the recent past Moreover an acquaintance with the former attempts at Indianization would also provide us with a clue to know whether such moves are in the interest of our people today

Woman s possition in society provides an extremely useful means of understanding the character of social structure While Hindus worshipped *Kali or Shakti* and called India motherland their social institutions and customs revealed yet another story This was the story of child marraige, of *Sati* of female infanticide of *Niyoga* or the practice of compelling one s wife to cohabit with some one else in order to beget children of insufferable widowhood of deprivation of property rights and of almost unconditional slavery to husband after the dictum that one s husband *is God in reality* The ideal womanhood of ours namely the mythological Shilavati goes to the extent of carrying her deformed husband on her own shoulders to a prostitute s place to fulfil her husband s wishes In Bengal there were *Kulin* Brahmins who married sometimes even to the tune of hundred or more wives and carried a personal diary which was inscribed with fathers in law s addresses so that during their connubial tour the unusual husbands could go about collecting their levies from the fathers in law [2] Broadly speaking the revivalists and the conservatives were defending almost all these institutions which were absolutely cruel to the female From the defence of *Sati* and child marriage to the demonstration opposing the provisions of Hindu Code Bill organised by R S S and Jan Sangh it was a continuous chain of reactionary movements which we come across in India This represents a historical trend a mixture of ortho doxy conservatism anti intellectualism and obscurantism which may be summed up as the residue of resistance to change

Movements in Defence of Child Marriage and Widowhood

Child marriage has been a curse of Hindu or even Indian society since ages The protagonists and the opponents often

2 H H Risley *The People of India* P 166

quote the religious texts to prove their case Whether the religion permits or not the custom continued since long and many upper castes had accepted the idea of prepubertal marriages as a religious custom One of the old folk songs in Kannada language has this theme A Brahmin girl was discarded hands and feet tied and blindfolded in the depth of the forest because she had attained puberty before she could get married. A low caste man a toddy tapper comes that way and hearing the cry of the girl he rescues her The girl tells her benefactor of the Brahminical custom of child marriage and explains how the Brahmins disallow unmarried daughters to stay at home after puberty and abandon them in the forest The toddy tapper an elderly man was shocked at this and condemns the cruel and uncivilized custom of Brahmins He tells her Luckily there is no such custom in other castes can there be such hard hearted people who will discard their daughters once having brought them up to be devoured by wild beasts in the forest The girl requests him to take her to his home and also offers to marry the man At this the toddy tapper feels amused and tells her that such elderly men do not marry young girls in his community—she was like a daughter to him—and if she wants a husband she may marry his nephew [3]

This cruel institution of child marriage resulted in many injurious consequences Sometimes members of a whole family were excommunicated for the simple reason that an innocent girl in the family attained biological maturity before marriage at the age of nine or ten. It produced a very large number of child widows who were literally left to rot and dissipate in a society where widows were inauspicious and condemned to live a wretched life of inhuman sufferings Some of them were burnt to death some out of desperation and irrepressible biological urge joined the ranks of prostitutes and a large number of them sought refuge in widow homes run by missionaries and ultimately embraced Christianity Child marriage the difficulties of finding grooms and the exorbitant demands of dowry were also at the back of the practice of female infanticide In the words of Mr Justice Mitra Thousands of girl wives have to suffer in patience maltreatment like prisoners under their father in law s

3 E. K. Pillai, *Some Problems of Kerala History* Vol. III Pp 110-113

several such model movements of Indianization which were inspired and conducted by the ideological predecessors of the present move To the exposition of Indianization and for the correct appreciation of the vested interest it is necessary that we cite some such example from the recent past Moreover an acquaintance with the former attempts at Indianization would also provide us with a clue to know whether such moves are in the interest of our people today

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3 E K. Pillai *Some Problems of Kerala History* Vol. III Pp 110-113

roofs in consequence of their fathers inability to meet unjust demands Placed in strange house for the first time the poor girl wives sorely feel the absence of their father mother brothers and sisters they are constantly tormented by the abusive epithets heaped on their parents and they are themselves subjected to intolerable personal ill usage These circumstances drive us to the conclusion that it would be far better to kill girls as soon as they are born [4]

Such miserable results of child marriage did invoke deep sympathy and concern in the minds of social reformers during the middle of the nineteenth century At the instance of Pandit Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar in the year 1856 a law was enacted to remove all legal objections to the marriage of Hindu widows There were twelve times more opponents to this bill than the number of supporters The orthodox Hindus were all against this The opposition against him (Vidyasagar) reached such an alarming stage that his life was thought to be in danger [5] The first widow marriage was a very sensational and widely talked about event in Calcutta [6] The reactionary forces opposed widow marriage so much so that many of the Brahmo Samajists who helped the widows had to suffer all types of opposition including even attacks upon their homes Similar was the opposition to the Act of 1872 which was passed at the instance of Keshab Chandra Sen and which abolished early marriages made polygamy penal sanctioned widow remarriages and inter caste marriages [7] Again passing of this act was strongly opposed by a section of Hindus and it gave an impetus to Hindu revivalist movement

Human reaction to social events often show ideological differences their interests and their world view such reactions are also useful material for evaluating historical personalities and groups In the context of such roles of individuals and groups they may also be judged as revivalists reformists or radical and so on We shall take up three significant events and see how different people reacted to them Later we may examine the

4 H H Risely *The People of India* P 169
5 R C Majumdar *Op Cit* Pp 277 78
6 Natraj *Social Reform in India* P 40
7 Siva Nath Shastri *History of the Brahmo Samaj* Vol 1 P 251

India He carried on agitation in England, brought considerable pressure upon the government to raise the age of consent to twelve and forbid the consummation of marriage before that age A good section of public supported Malabari The widows of Surat sent appeals to seths of the community and the widows of Navsari petitioned to the Gaekwar of Baroda Support came from the Indian language press and the city of Bombay was also wholly in support[10] But the reactionaries made a concentrated attack on Malabari and raised the cry of religion in danger In the meanwhile a tragic case of a Bengali child wife named Phulmani who died in Calcutta as a result of forcible intercourse by her thirty year old husband took place This outrageous incident strengthened the case for reform[11] In the words of Max Muller this led to the demand from Europeans ' that the strong arm of the English law be not rendered infamous by aiding and abetting unnatural atrocities Two thousand women of Bombay submitted a memorial to Queen Victoria[12] And at last through the efforts of Malabari when the Bill raising the age of consent was brought forward it roused country wide opposition The defenders of this cruel custom of child marriage rose in revolt all over the country

The Bengal scene in those days was described in the following words Never before within living memory had Bengal been so agitated Crowds of excited Hindus paraded the streets all the day and far into the night yelling at the pitch of their voices 'our religion is in danger Those who were still sane enough to argue protested that the Bill was an infringement of the Queen s proclamation of 1858 by which she pledged her government to a policy of non interference with the religions of her Indian subjects A monster meeting of protest was held on the maidan the attendance was estimated at one hundred thousand No such public demonstration had ever been seen in Calcutta When it became apparent that the appeals to the Government of India and to the Secretary of State were in vain it was resolved as a last resort to make a supreme effort to move *Kali* the partron Goddess of Calcutta to intervene A

10 Natraj *Op Cit* P 83
11 Farquhar *Op Cit* P 397
12 *Ibid* P 84

Mahapuja or whole day of fasting prayer and sacrifice was proclaimed at Kalighat the great shrine of this popular deity in one of the suburbs of Calcutta It was estimated at the time that two hundred thousand rupees were spent on the ceremony Three hundred pundits many of whom had been brought from Benaras led the devotions One devotee wished to sacrifice himself upon the altar and was with difficulty restrained from his purpose Others like the priests of Baal cut themselves with knives [13] All these strange things were conducted to defend child marriage

While things were moving in this direction in Bengal the opposition to the Bill was mounting in Bombay and the champion of orthodoxy was none other than Bal Gangadhar Tilak himself In the words of even his most sympathetic biographer Tilak was the only public man of his day to be wholly against the Bill and therefore he widely came to be looked upon as the only champion of Hindu orthodoxy and conservatism He addressed a number of public meetings at Poona Sholapur and in Bombay and led a bitter attack against Ranade Bhandarkar and Agarkar describing them as reformers in hurry In the *Kesari* and the *Maratha* he carried on an incessant campaign against Mr Malabari the social reformer and the government [14]

Tilak was an orthodox man who held strange views on moral and social problems Though lionized by political expediency his theoretical position was that the time honoured customs and traditions should not be changed without the sanction of the religious heads [15] Thus inspite of the vigorous attempt by the representatives of the most orthodox and revivalist elements to perpetuate the inhuman cruelties of child marriage upon female children the bill was passed in the year 1891 This is one model of Indianization which failed no doubt but its leaders still are worshipped like heroes by the contemporary conservatives who espouse Indianization

In Defence of Burning Child Widows and Those with Babes In Arms

Cases have frequently occurred where women have been

13 Kenneth Mcdonald Pp 188 9 See Farquhar *Op Cit* P 398
14 T V Parvate *Bal Gangadhar Tilak*
15 *Ibid* P 44

induced by the persuasions of their next heirs interested in their destruction to burn themselves on the funeral pyres of their husbands that others who have been induced by fear to retreat a resolution rashly expressed in the first moment of grief of burning with their deceased husbands have been forced upon the pyre and were bound down with ropes and pressed with green bamboos until consumed by the flames that some after flying from flames have been carried back by their relations and burned to death [16] This is how Ram Mohan Roy described *Sati*—the most notorious of Hindu institutions He himself probably had witnessed the brutalities perpetrated upon his elder brother s widow In spite of her unwillingness at the last moment the relatives and others at the cremation held her down with bamboo poles and drowned her frantic shrieks with tom toms and conches [17] Thousands of unfortunate widows young and old *were burned to death year after year in the name of religion* Within a radius of 30 miles from Calcutta no less than three hundred cases occurred during six months in the year 1804 Orthodox Hindu cultural background exercised great social pressure upon the widow to commit such suicide and often this was supplemented by the suggestive crowds assembled on the occasion by creating a psychosis in favour of burning and to this end drugs drums and religious cries and all other conceivable aids were used and the helpless widow induced into a trance and even then she was forcibly held on the funeral pyre All these barbaric acts were done in the name of religion and Hindu Law Colebrook s *Digest of Hindu Law*—an authoritative manual of Hindu Law prepared with the help of learned Brahmins—says No other affectual duty is known for virtuous women at any time after the death of their lords except casting them selves into the same fire [18]

The British administrators here and there tried to prevent *Sati* but there was no law whereby they could do that The Government moved cautiously in the matter and at last during the year 1812 to 1817 they put certain restrictions upon drugging burning of pregnant widows and those with babes in arms

16 R C Majumdar *Op Cit* Vol X Part II P 272
17 Natraj *Op Cit* P 29
18 R. C Majumdar *Op Cit* Vol X Part, II P 29

and also such of them who had not attained puberty But the orthodox Hindus of Calcutta sent a petition to the Government asking to repeal the orders[19] In other words these Hindu revivalists in their deep sense of religiosity wanted to drug and murder the widows whether they were pregnant women with babes in arms or even if they were children below the age of puberty ! Such was the sadism and cruelty of the revivalists who claimed to be the defenders of Hindu faith They also invented authority in the *Rigveda* in support of *Sati* Orientalists like Wilson and Max Muller thought that it was a distortion In the words of Max Muller this was perhaps the most flagrant instance of what can be done by any unscrupulous priesthood[20] Ram Mohan Roy who carried a vigorous campaign against *Sati* and made representation to the government and educated the public on this issue was opposed by the orthodox Hindus so much so that for a time Ram Mohan s life was in danger

At last *Sati* was prohibited and made illegal by William Bentinck on December 4 1829 But the orthodox did not give up the fight They sent a petition for the annulment of the new law to William Bentinck The signatories included zamindars and notable leaders of Hindu community Raja Radhakant and Maharaja Kali Krishna Bahadur and others When they met William Bentinck in a deputation they were told that they might appeal to the king in council On this the Dharma Sabha was established and a deputation to England was organised to be led by an English lawyer Mr Francis Bathis Mr Bathis took up his task with utmost professional optimism his clients being debarred by their very orthodoxy from undertaking the sea voyage A mishap to the ship in which he sailed was taken as a providential aid to the cause enabling more signatures to be added to the 800 on the petition ! [21] Ram Mohan Roy representing the Emperor of Delhi took up the other side and in his presence the petition was rejected by the Privy Council

All these above instances were historical models of Indianization because if this term were to be meaningful it must

19 *Ibid* p 270
20 Natraj *Op Cit* p 34

imply conversion or change of people to levels of behaviour which can be characterised as typically Indian And all these efforts which we described just now were such attempts at retaining or re introducing what was thought to be typically Indian or Hindu Hence the question before the thinking people of India is this can we subscribe today to such ideas opposed to freedom and equality of women and other under privileged groups and castes ? Can we today in our sanity dare to advocate the *varna* or caste system ? Is it feasible today to advocate or believe in the fatalist theory of *Karma* or is it possible and practicable for us to impress upon any one to accept blindly the idea of *Swadharma* and be condemned to the position of a slave or a menial in the lowest rung of caste system ? Will anyone advocate *Ashrama* system and thereby deny *Brahmacharya* or a period of education to women ?

The absurdity of the revivalist approach of Indianization or Hinduization had been pointed out by M G Ranade in the following significant poser When we are asked to revive our institutions and customs people seem to be very much at sea as to what it is they seek to revive What particular period of our history is to be taken as the old ? Whether the period of the *Vedas* of the *Smritis* of the *Puranas* or of the Mohammedan or modern Hindu times ? Our usages have been changed from time to time The men and the gods of those old days ate and drank for bidden things to excess in a way no revivalist will now venture to recommend Shall we revive the twelve forms of sons or eight forms of marriages which included capture and recogni zed mixed and illegitimate intercourse ? Shall we revive the *Niyoga* system of procreating sons on our brother s wives when widowed ? Shall we revive the old liberties taken by the *rishis* and by the wives of the *rishis* with the marital tie ? Shall we revive the hecatombs of animals sacrificed year s end to year s end and in which human beings were not spared as propitiatory offerings ? Shall we revive the *Shakti* worship of the left hand with its indecencies and practical debaucheries ? Shall we revive the *Sati* and infanticide customs or the flinging of living men into the rivers or over rocks or hookswinging or the crushing beneath Jagannath car ? Shall we revive the internecine wars of the Brahmins and Kshatriyas or the cruel persecution and degradation of the aboriginal population ? Shall we revive the

custom of many husbands to one wife or of many wives to one husband ? Shall we require our Brahmins to cease to be land lords and gentlemen and turn into beggars and dependents upon the king as in olden times ?

These instances will suffice to show that the plan of reviving the ancient usages and customs will not work for our salvation and is not practicable [2]

These words of Ranade are as much true in these days as they were in his time We have already referred to the Jana Sangh s campaign against the rights and privileges of women conceded by the Hindu Code This movement against the Hindu Code was indeed very significant because it has carried forth the olden and true traditions of the Hindu revivalists who were opposed to all reforms and were the advocates in favour of burning their own sisters or condemning them into irredeemable widowhood

In Defence of Cow Will they Ban Vedas and Upanishads ?

Similarly the movement against cow killing which is hardly a positive show of love towards that animal is more inspired by the hostility towards beef eaters the Muslims and Christians than anything else In 1882 Dayanand Saraswati founded the Gorakhshani Sabha and the anti cow killing agitation spread to many parts of the country During 1893 the activities of the Gorakshani Sabha had led to riots in many places in Bihar when Hindus used force to rescue cows from the hands of Muslim butchers [22] In the same year there were riots in Bombay which again it was alleged was due to the same type of activities In the controversy about the cause of riot that followed B G Tilak took side with the Hindus and justified the participation of Bombay Mill workers in the riot Under Tilak s leadership the Poona Hindus became determined and organised to assert their rights The Gorakshani Sabha there held a public meeting *and passed a resolution demanding stoppage of cow slaughter* Within few weeks of the riots of 1893 came Ganesh Chaturthi which was chosen by Tilak to build up Hindu unity and solidarity The conduct of Tilak in general and the manner of Ganapati celebrations in particular created sufficient misgivings

22 C. Y Chintamani *Indian Social Reform* Part II Pp 89 90
23 R C Majumdar *Op Cit* Vol. X, Part II P 334

in the minds of social reformers and other liberal sections of Hindus not to speak of Muslims They charged Tilak with pugnacity and quarrelsomeness and he was widely identified as a communalist The fears came true when serious riots broke out in Poona at the fag end of Ganapati celebrations in 1894[24]

The cow continued to be the preoccupation of Tilak Soon after the Shivaji festival he publish d the following verses in *Kesari* which were put in the mouth of Shivaji *It said* The cow is taken daily to the slaughter house and mercilessly butchered by the unbelievers How can I bear this heart rend ing spectacle ? Have all our leaders become like helpless figures on the chessboard ? [25]

This cow tradition was recently resurrected by RSS in its Akhil Bharatiya Pratinidhi Sabha in 1952 when it decided to *mobilise public opinion in the entire country and collect signa* tures on a mass petition requesting the *President* of *India* to ban cow slaughter Akhil Bharatiya Gohatya Nirodh Samiti was *formed* in *1954* under the *Presidentship of Prabhu Datt Brahma* chari RSS people were in the forefront of the movement organised *by* this Samiti on August 22 1954[26] And when in *1966* the same forces including the Sankaracharyas and the *Sadhus* in the *name of cows ransacked the Indian Capital the* Central Government buildings the Parliament House, the All India Radio and the then Congress President Kamaraj had a narrow escape The then Home Minister Gulzari Lal Nanda had to quit for his misplaced enthusiasm for the cow

Evidently anti cow killing movement is yet another concrete example of Indianization The RSS the Jan Sangh and the like minded elements want that all those who wish to be in the mainstream of Indian life should abjure beef and show venera tion to cow If this is accepted as *the standard of Indianness* then the Vedic gods like Indra who ate large quantities of beef sage *Yajnavalkya who was fond of tender flesh of* cows and the great Valmiki the author of *Ramayana* who had killed a fattened calf in honour of yet another great saint Vasistha s visit to his Ashram and almost all the ancient Hindus till the time of 800

24 Parvate *Op Cit* P 91
25 R. C. Majumdar *Op Cit* P 581
26 S B Saxena *Sociologia* Vol. III P 54

A D would have to be branded as un Indians *Vedas Brahmanas Upanishads Uttararamcharita* various sources of Buddhist literature and *Mahabharata*—all these respected sacred scriptures of Hindus and Buddhists—make beef eating habits of ancient Hindus as clear as day light The *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* prescribes eating boiled rice with beef and butter to husband and wife so that they may get a vigorous progeny [27] Dr P V Kane s monumental work *History of Dharma Sastra* the writings of Ramesh Chandra Dutt Albert Schwietzer and of the famous German sociologist Max Weber—all these authoritative works make the fact of beef eating practice of Hindus abundantly clear Excavations and archaeological evidence accumulated by Prof H D Sankalia *also proves the universal habit of cow killing* among the ancient Hindus [28] It is believed only after the 600 A D or so gradually under the influence of Vaishnavism and Jainism in the south and with the help of Vaishnava kings did the cow become a sacred cult as it is today [29] However that the prohibition was not universal even as late as the twelfth century has been proved beyond any doubt [30]

Now a question may be raised Are the Pundits Gurus and Acharyas who claim to be great scholars and defenders of Hindus unaware of the sacred literature of Hindus and the fact that they contain references to cow slaughter ? If they knew it and even then they are ignoring and suppressing it in that case what is the type of Indianization that they are preaching ? Are they not avoiding the true traditions of the *Vedas* the *Upanishads* and the *Puranas* ? Those who hold faith in the infallibility of the *Vedas* must not plead for banning of cow slaughter and if they do it would be nothing short of double talk One must not run with hare and hunt with hound Yet another dilemma the revivalist will have to confront is that if cow killing offends the Hindu sentiment our *Vedas Upanishads* and *Puranas* are indeed very offending to the Hindus because all those sacred books are full of references and advocacy of cow killing and eating ! Would Indianization include a demand to ban such

27 Prodipto Roy also Vishnu Dutt See *Seminar* (93)
28 H D Sankalia *Ibid* Pp 13 16
29 Vishnu Dutt *Op Cit* P 35
30 H D Sankalia *Op Cit* P 15

'offensive literature of the ancient Hindus besides the prohibition of cow slaughter'

Perhaps it should be clear to everyone that in this case Indianization does not seek to follow the authoritative Hindu or Indian tradition What then is the function of these agitations? We have seen that whenever the cow has actively figured in any controversy there have been Hindu Muslim tensions and its role has been that of an irritant between these communities Except nursing a new superstition by cultivating false sentiments and communal feelings what problem does this solve and how would this help the people? Prohibition of cow slaughter would adversely affect leather industry would also burden the agriculturists with unwanted and worn out cattle making it altogether uneconomic to maintain them they are bound to qualitatively affect the dairy industry in the country Hence the plea can have only one function—that of increasing communal tension and thereby increasing the possibility of certain parties and groups attaining the status of champions and defenders of Hindu faith That even this narrow exploitative function of the cow has not been achieved and is not likely to be achieved is evident from the recent unpopularity and decline of Jana Sangh in the Hindi belt which at one time was thought to be a fertile ground to sow the seeds of superstition

(B) Hinduization Brahminization or Sanskritization?

All those writers who have cared to study the cultural history of India from the Vedic days to the present time have noted a broad trend in the cultural process which has been differently characterized as Brahminization Aryanization Hinduization and Sanskritization Though using different terms they all indicate basically the same thing During the early phase of the Vedic period there were continuous fights and struggles between the immigrant Indo Aryan tribes and the earlier inhabitants of India Attempt of the *Devas* to conquer territories and the *Asuras* defeating them at every turn consequent to this the *Devas* feeling the need for a strong leader and the consecration of Indra as the king and stories of destruction of the Indus valley cities by Indra in a way marked the initial

stages[31] Even as the theory of *Varnas* and the Brahminical immunities developed there were instances of challenges to Brahminical position from Kshatriyas In fact Jainism and Buddhism were such challenges to Brahminism its divine origin immunities and hierarchical order However as centuries rolled by the *Varna* system became rigid, making Brahmin supremacy unchallenged

Writing about the post Vedic period Dr G S Ghurye says This period sees a great consolidation of the position of the Brahmin class while the degradation of the Shudras comes out in marked contrast to the growing superiority of the Brahmins The discomfiture of the *Kshatriyas* is complete and the *Vaishyas* at least the general mass have progressively approximated to the *Shudras* The three lower castes are ordered to live according to the teaching of the Brahmin who shall declare their duties while the king is exhorted to regulate their conduct accordingly [32] Though such an absolute supremacy of the Brahmin is derived from the Brahminical literature which was likely to exaggerate their own class image at least [illegible] highly exploitative society where the *vaishyas* and the *sudras* sustained the productive activities and bore the brunt of economic exploitation was evident Tax free land to Brahmins gifts and at times almost compulsory gifts to Brahmins discriminating punishments for others and immunities to Brahmins minimum of interests charged on loans to Brahmins and the maximum from *sudras* freedom from debt enslavement for Brahmins while all other castes could be enslaved on account of non payment of debts All this had certainly become the practice The Sudras accumulation of wealth should be for the benefit of other *Varnas* Moreover a *sudra* was not permitted to amass wealth because it would harm Brahmins and other high caste people, and hence his property could be confiscated This is the nature of Brahminical social order that emerges from the sources like Kautilya Gautam Katyayana Manu and others [33]

31 on circumstantial evidence Indra stands accused for the destruction of Indus Valley cities and citadels says M Wheeler in *Ancient India* iii 87 ff also [illegible] Piggot *Prehistoric India* Pp 214-89

32 [illegible] S Ghurye *Caste and Class in India* P 57

33 Ram Sharan Sharma, *Some Economic Aspects of the Caste System in Ancient India* Pp 1 19

zation reached the lowest of the groups by a process of percolation from top to bottom through *intermediaries* Land owning classes trustees of temples and those with hypergamous practices were also often found to be sources of Sanskritization because *under the influence of* such groups and practices the lower castes were induced to the acceptance of the way of life of the upper castes

A Cultural Case Study

To know the exact nature of motivational forces of the Sanskritizing process and how it worked and under what type of conditions it is necessary to examine a concrete area where this process had been taking place Kerala is ideally suited for such a case study because the place is culturally well defined and the Sanskritization process reached there comparatively very late and therefore the evidence is more dependable An outline of this process may be briefly stated so that it becomes possible for us to understand the causal factors and conditions of Sanskritization

The Aryan Contact and Change of Language

One of the major assumptions of this process is that there is a highly Sanskritized strata in the local culture so that the transmission of Sanskritized traits to the non Sanskritized strata is made possible Now it is well known that Kerala was part of Tamilakam or Tamil land and the language of the old Cera kingdom (Kerala) was Tamil[39] The social life of the *region was also in common with the rest of the Tamil land* particularly the hill countries of the Tamil land Thus in olden days Kerala in terms of language and culture was wholly Dravidian *There was hardly any Sanskritization* or any pronounced Aryan influence in this area till about the seventh century A D Around this period there was a large immigration of Aryans from the north to the south Apart from the evidence of strong Brahminical traditions in Kerala Tuluva Karnatak and Maharashtra which indicate this southward move the various temple inscriptions speak of the arrival of companies of learned Brahmins in order to make the place pure free from

39 N Shastry *Pandyan Kin dom* P [illegible] Also Robert Caldwell *A Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian Family of Languages* P 14

sin and filled with merit' There were also instances of Chalukya kings making grants of villages to such Brahmins Historians of Kerala and Karnatak both give ample evidence of this immigration [40] The North and South Canara Gazetteers express the view that this movement of Brahmins from the north may have been consequent on the destruction of Valabhi in Gujarat by the Arabs in the seventh or eighth century A D [41] During this period the Arab attack and the subsequent trouble in Sind is also well known Thus the large exodus of Aryans (Namboodiri Brahmins) to Kerala was thought to be around 700 A D

Besides this historical evidence of arrival of substantial number of Brahmins to Kerala the subsequent cultural changes that appeared in the region around the eighth century A D is indeed remarkable New names of towns appear in many parts of Kerala repeating the names of towns in Karnataka and Maharashtra The language begins to change altogether into a new one Once the ancient Tamil grammarians considered this area to be that part of the Tamil country where chaste Tamil was spoken This position changed when at the outset of the ninth century the language began to branch off though till the eleventh century A D it was the Tolkapian (Tamil grammatical work) rules which were applied to the language of Kerala [4] Dr Caldwell considered Malayalam as an off shoot of Tamil differing chiefly at present by its disuse of personal terminations and the larger amount of Sanskrit derivatives it has availed itself of [43] It is remarkable he says that the Brahminization of language and literature should now have become so complete The Sanskritization process of language was such that a new script had to be evolved to facilitate the expression of an overwhelming number of Sanskrit words in Malayalam

40 (a) Salatore *Ancient Karnataka* Pp 296 299 *Ibid* Footnote Pp 325 326
(b) E K Pillai *Op Cit* Pp 61 100
(c) Dr Fleet *The Ind an Antiquary* Vol X Pp 250 258
(d) K P P Menon *History of Kerala* Vol III P 29

41 (a) *North Canara Ga etteer* I P 117
(b) *South Canara Ga etteer* II P 60

42 E K Pillai *Lan uage and Literature through Centuries* P 18

43 Caldwell *Op Cit* P 18—R R Verma (*Kerala Paniniyam*) and E K Pillai (*Lan uage and Literature through Centuries*) are the other leading authorities who agree with this view

Sanskritization and Stratification

Simultaneous to the changes in language there were drastic modifications in the social hierarchy customs manners and religion A new system of caste appeared which divided the society into two broad segments The one called *Savarna* or those who belong to the *Varna* system and the others known as *Avarnas* or those who are beyond the pale of the caste system Naturally the Namboodiris were at the apex of the *Savarna* group After them came an intermediary group of castes composed of various small groups Some of them were outcastes from Brahmins and the others were those who got elevated out of Nayars who constituted the major base of the *Savarna* group All these groups from Namboodiris to Nayars were somewhat integrated as a section of people entitled to enter temples and use the common temple tank for bath and also commonly served by exclusive castes of washermen and barbers This *Savarna* system was governed by hypergamy and thus not only biological integration but also the flow of culture from Namboodiris down to the Nayar caste directly and through intermediaries were made easy Hence we find in the traditional Kerala a very high rate of Sanskritization among the *Savarnas* Of course even here the degree of Sanskritization was directly correlated to the proximity to the temples and thus ultimately nearer the Brahminical contact We shall see later that this *Savarna* system has been mainly conceived from the point of the Namboodiris and *almost all regulatory principles* were developed from the Brahminical angle There are several instances of upgrading and down grading of castes in order to serve the Brahminical cause However the social distance between the Brahmin and the rest of the intermediary and Nayar castes were very much pronounced

The *Avarna* section contained some of the prominent groups of the pre Brahminical days who seem to have lost their positions—*probably because of their failure to make adjustments* with the Brahminical order Still even this section came under Sanskritization through a different channel The carpenters the medicine men and astrologers and such other occupational groups belonging to this segment also became highly Sanskritized Their *training* upto a requisite standard was essential for the upper caste This and the exceptional scholars who broke the caste

rules and let the knowledge percolate to the lower and prohibited rungs of caste should explain the phenomenon of Sanskritization among the *Avarna* section of people particularly because they were kept at great social and physical distances from the caste Hindus especially Brahmins At one time not long ago the Sanskritization process among the various castes of Kerala had become so well established that people and their caste identity could be easily recognized by their accent and conversational style

Vegetarianism and Religion

Drastic changes occurred in the field of religion and customs and manners of the people Vegetarianism spread among various castes in proportion to their contact with Brahmins Not only human beings but even gods became vegetarian in place of blood sacrifice red flowers and red liquid made of turmeric and lime were substituted in many temples Gods who were chronic non vegetarians made allowance to the Brahminical sentiments and on occasions of important celebrations behaved like good boys and practised vegetarianism so that the Brahmin priests could enter the temples and presided over the ceremonies Just as the people began to adopt Sanskritized names in place of strictly local names the gods also changed their name—proving the dictum that gods are made after the image of man In this process the little tradition got merged with the great tradition though not wholly because at the lower levels where Sanskritiza tion was not pronounced the little tradition survived Besides this ritual purity various rites and religious observations manners and speech systems of medicine and magic—all these and many more became Sanskritized

The Power behind Sanskritization

In short what happened subsequent to the arrival of large number of Brahmins in Kerala is total re ordering of society enveloping all avenues of life Call this process by any name—Aryanization Brahminization Sanskritization or Indianization—it is our contention that the charge outlined above is impossible in the context of contemporary democratic set up or in a free contact situation of an open society To explain this we must turn towards the social forces responsible for bringing about

such changes In this case it is nothing else than the Brahminical power How could an immigrant minority become so powerful? What were their sources of power? Just as the capitalist class became the wielders of destiny of any society under capitalist system so also the landlords in an agricultural civilization could be the pace setters But how the Namboodiris became such a powerful class of landlords is to be presently examined Apart from land the second source of their power is the legal and social codes made by them in defence of their interest Thirdly the Namboodiris were not merely temporal they were a theocratic community and hence a very important source of their power was religion which in the local context means the hold over the rich and resourceful temples These three sources of power—landlordism legal cum social codes and religion—in the feudal order of the olden society of Kerala were not independent sources but definitely interdependent and they all represented the class interest of Brahmins and other closely associated upper castes These were the powers which were instrumental in making them not only models of Sanskritization to others but also compelling others to follow that model with utmost loyalty and devotion

The Rise of Landlordism

There is a mythological as well as a historical account of the rise of Brahmin landlordism in Kerala The mythological account is found in Brahminical traditions like *Keralolpathy* (origin of Kerala) *Kerala Mahathmyam* and *Sankara Smriti* The last one is claimed to be of the great Sankara Even though experts do not admit this claim it is universally accepted by Brahmins as their authoritative legal cum social code The mythological story runs like this Parasurama after defeating the Kshatriyas twentyone times went to Gokarna and with a view to expiate the sins of having exterminated the heroes ascended the mountain and worshipped Varuna paid homage to the goddess earth and made the sea to recede and thus created the land between Gokarna and Kanyakumari and called it Malayalam He also installed one hundred and eighty gods to protect this land and yet the tremble of earth did not cease hence Shri Parasurama decided to have Brahmins and brought

them from various places and the land was gifted to them'[44] This is how Brahmins became owners of the whole of Kerala according to their own tradition

But history tells us a different story Soon after the Brahmins reached Kerala they gradually became a class of landlords How could they acquire land ? This especially in view of the fact that they were prohibited from economic activities meant to acquire wealth is interesting Professor E K Pillai has shown through a painstaking study of inscriptions historical and archaeological evidences how the rise of landlordism took place in Kerala[45] The Brahmins became elected or nominated *trustees of temples* and in course of time they managed to be hereditary trustees The Sanskrit term *Janmam* is the present equivalent of free hold in Kerala *Janmam* means *literally life in other words property that can be enjoyed for* the whole life When trusteeship became not merely a life time affair through reappointment or election, but a hereditary right of the Brahmin families the *Janmam* or life time began to assume the meaning of permanent ownership In course of time the phrase God s property is the same as Brahminical property appears making no distinction between the two There are evidences to show that vast areas of temple land appeared to have changed hands from God to Brahmins[46] Some times people s council and kings taking action against such trustees are recorded

The trustees had become so arrogant and powerful that once having got the information that a former king of Travancore was to visit the famous Suchindram temple they closed the temple earlier to spite the king and went away[47] Though in this particular case the king suppressed the trustees and brought about reform in the administration of the temple there are temple inscriptions and other records which show that kings were p nalised for having offended the Aryans and made to donate huge properties to the temples[48] Large quantities of

44 *Keralolpatty* (Trichur) P 1
45 E K Pillai Landlordism in Kerala *Mathrubhumi Weekly* Vol XXXV No 50 51 52 (1958)
46 *Ibid* No 50 P ■
47 *Ibid* No 52 P 7
48 *Ibid* No 51 based on Rameshwaram (Quilon) Temple Inscription

gold gifted to the temples penalties realized for various offences from the temple employees and huge sums specified for certain pujas and charities were misused by the trustees and all these exploits went to the strengthening of landlords In this process lands donated to temples for religious purposes lands kept with the temples by fake donations with the sole purpose of tax evasion by the rich non Brahmins all disappeared into thin air and even genuine properties of Gods got reduced by thousands of acres All these in addition to the usual gifts and donations of land made to the Brahmins by both kings and commoners Hence it should be clear that it was not the mythological Parasurama who gifted the whole Kerala to the Brahmins but they themselves acquired it through a very worldly process of begetting wealth by people placed in such circumstances And this process of Brahmins becoming landlords as we shall see later, is one of the major factors responsible for Sanskritization It is significant because of the reversal of class position—the pre Aryan landed class now became tenants and the Brahmins became landed aristocracy

Sankara Smriti

This is the Brahminical code in a way the local *Manu Smriti* of Kerala Social and legal codes generally indicate the interests of dominant class and also show the devices they employ to keep themselves in position A casual glance at *Sankara Smriti* would show the group interest of Brahmins it represented and the techniques it envisaged to keep up that interest Tax exemption and non confiscation of Brahminical property as well as the injunction to kings to make gifts of lands to Brahmins were parts of the prescription While these were clearly located in their economic interest there were codes calculated to maintain differential treatment among the castes and always upholding the supremacy of the Brahmin The king should protect Brahmins no profit should be charged from Brahmins while 'more may be exacted out of others and the *sudra* should serve the Brahmin and live by what the former is pleased to give *Sudras* should not study Sanskrit *Shastras* and *Vedas* but they should not be illiterate There was yet another set of codes intended to maintain power and domination of the Namboodiris King should keep Brahmin in

forefront in all matters 'Sudra should always work for Brahmin always obey him without exercising any discretion 'Sudra should be always ready to please Brahmin even if the former scolds he should not retort Sudra should obey Brahmin in whatever he says *he should observe all the taboos imposed by the Brahmin* without any thought 'whatever duties are prescribed by Brahmins should be done [49]

The prescription for kings is to treat the Brahmins exceptionally well in every respect and safeguard Brahmins property in every possible way and also to take Brahmins into confidence and be guided by them in all significant matters of state And a king who follows all these prescriptions is guaranteed a seat in the heaven [50]

Apart from this an order of sixtyfour rules called *Kerala Anacharam* which contains regulations of cleanliness ritual purity procedures of bathing and many taboos regarding day to day life is also a part of *Sankara Smriti* [51] In this way one comes across regulation of life of all the castes who come under the *Savarna* section and in all this the authority and interest of Namboodiri is maintained supreme In fact there are many unwritten traditions which go far beyond what is contained in *Sankara Smriti* For instance there was almost an unwritten rule in olden days in dominant Namboodiri areas of Kerala that men and women should not cover their upper portion when they appear before the Namboodiri Not only this one of the traditionally learned Namboodiris gave evidence before the Malabar Marriage Commission that the *Smriti* says If a Brahmin wished to have sexual intercourse with a Sudra s wife the Sudra would be bound to satisfy the wish [52]

The tyranny of this landlord class as indicated by evidences available in history and sociology of the region seem to have not really been felt by the people probably because of the power of indoctrination and of religious legitimization resorted to by

49 *Sankara Smriti* (Trichur) Pp 181 191
50 *Ibid* Pp 181 191 plus P 12
51 *Ibid* Pp 233 237
52 *Paper No 8* (Evidence of Ashtamoorthi Namboodiripad) Appendix II of the report of Malabar Marriage Commission

the Namboodiris. Therefore the comment that "with all this self assertion a Namboodiri who is true to the best traditions of his race in respect to unworldliness gentleness simplicity and benevolence presents himself to the Hindu mind a model of Hindu piety coupled with a charming innocence and a noble simplicity"[53] is not without substance

The linguistic evidences as found in conversations between Namboodiri and others also suggest that the social distance between him and others and the prestige that he enjoyed even as late as a century ago in Kerala was immense The census reporter puts this in this way His person is holy his directions are commands his movements are processions his meal is nectar he is the holiest of human beings he is the representative of God on earth[54] It was this model which inspired and made a whole population to tread the path of Sanskritization

Temple Centrism

In their dual position of landlords and temple trustees an overwhelming majority of people at once became dependent upon Namboodiris as tenants and cultivators Landlord tenant relationship was not contractual in feudal society it involved many traditional obligations and submissiveness to landlords The Namboodiri was the arbitrator of social and religious life Especially because of the trusteeship of temples enforcement of ritual purity cleanliness and many taboos related to the conduct in the temple premises were all in the hands of Namboodiris Temples in Kerala were big affairs There were hundreds of people attached to temples in the capacity of drummers musicians florists mahouts suppliers of provisions fireworks men and other workers Moreover most of the important temples held thousands of acres of land which were let out for cultivation thereby attracting thousands of dependent tenants Temples were also places of recreation dance and drama They also sold meals in the form of *prasad* and provided bathing tanks for the neighbourhood The priests dispensed many medicines and also practised some form of magic such as driving away evil spirits by sprinkling holy water or even providing talisman and so on

53 William Logan, *Malabar Vol* I p 127 (Madras 1887)
54 *Travancore Census Report* 1874-75 p 191

There were also educational establishments along with the temples In this manner temples were carrying out functions of modern factories schools restaurants swimming pools cinema theatres hospitals rest houses all rolled into one In fact the culture of this region because of the great significance of temple at one time was decidedly temple-centric in character Most of the important cities of the past grew up around temples [55]

Thus religion and economic interests were inter woven In this complex life of temples the Namboodiri was the supreme authority who decided the code of conduct for all and if not simply because of religious reasons at least due to economic dependency the people employed or connected with temple in any manner could not have afforded to disobey him So the Sanskritization process in matters of conduct within the temple premises the ritual purity and taboos to be observed as a pre condition for the use of temple tank and also at the time of supplying items like milk, or even the requisite qualifications for taking *prasad* were the order of behaviour In this process ideas of pollution ritual purity and cleanliness mode of conduct speech and vegetarianism became part of the life of the newly Sanskritized people Those who failed to observe these patterns of life were prohibited from entering the temple or using the temple tank and also sometimes excommunicated from the caste Any one of these punishments put such people into serious dis abilities such as the denial of the service of functionaries like barbers and washermen to them Therefore the Sanskritization process which took place under such circumstances had un doubtedly an element of coercion

From the above account it is obvious that the factors mainly responsible for the Sanskritization pro ess were the following

(1) A combination of landlord class and theocratic ele ments into one
(2) The state (Kings) coming more or less compl telv under their control and guidance conceding to their authority and world view as if it were a part of the state and hence not interfering with the working of the system

55 E K Pillai Landlordism in Kerala *Mathrubhumi Weekly* Vol XXXV No 50 P 8

(3) A process of legitimization of the caste system in which the Sanskritization model remained at the apex and the seeming inequalities and injustices were hardly made to feel—particularly under conditions of back ward society with its absence of mass communication and public opinion

(4) The peculiar temple-centric character of the culture of ancient Kerala made it possible for all these forces i e landlordism religion and law (mostly in the sense of uninterfered social codes) to forge into a nucleus from where the Sanskritizing process could radiate to the whole society

No More Sanskritization but Fascism

A process like this cannot be conceived without a strong caste system in which the upper castes must be all powerful and privileged, not only in terms of mere ascribed status but in actual economic and political superiority In the case of Kerala all these were there and the hypergamous alliances practised by the Namboodiris and other intermediate castes was a special facilita ting factor This apart from becoming a vehicle of Sanskriti zation and vegetarianism also enhanced the political pull of the Namboodiris since the rulers were sons and daughters of Namboodiri fathers through such hypergamous marriages In a secular democratic republic like ours do we have any one of these pre requisites necessary for Sanskritizing or Indianizing others Neither any caste nor any group can afford to exercise those powers in a democratic system We have already seen only under conditions of caste economic and political domination Indianization of the kind can be spread None of the Hindu castes enjoys that position today over other castes nor Hindus as a whole over any other minority—Muslims or others More over the Hindu does not exist as a uniform cultural model for Indianization of others—the minorities Secondly so long as a democratic system continues such domination as required by the Indianization is impossible and inconceivable irrespective of the size of minorities to be Indianized Such a process is possible in modern times only through fascist techniques Perhaps in this context the concern expressed about the para military orga nization of RSS and its political wing Jana Sangh, is not without

foundation The plea for Indianization if it has to be materialized in any form must necessarily cut across the very foundation of our democratic republic and lead to some form of the Hindu brand of fascism This we have to presume because to bring back the old landed system and caste dominance is inconceivable and therefore a new system with those capacities of Sanskritization or Indianization has to be thought of And such a system in the context of today cannot be anything but a dictatorship

CHAPTER IV

Golwalkarism

(A) An Outline

Revivalist trends were always marked in the Indian renaissance The tradition continued through those who may be described as Hindu revolutionaries and nationalists Tilak in Maharashtra was a revivalist focus in the national struggle So was Savarkar a revolutionary turned communalist whose contribution to such outlook is too well known In fact the collapse of the Maratha empire and the defeat of the Peshwas had given rise to some nostalgic memories among a section of people and this appears to be a source of the strong and militant Hindu revivalist ideologies which sprang up in Maharashtra The contemporary phase of this ideology is basic to RSS and its formulator in the present shape is M S Golwalkar who heads that organisation Knowledge of elementary principles of what we may call Golwalkarism is essential to the understanding of the latest position of revivalism not only as an ideology but also as a social movement Moreover the origin of most of the communally oriented Hindu aggressive ideas in contemporary Indian politics is traceable to his thought Although the Jana Sangh has put forward the concept of Indianization it cannot truly claim anything more than the role of an amplifier for the RSS ideology Hence we will deal with the main features of Golwalkarism as it is depicted in the writings and speeches of M S Golwalkar

1 Grand World Mission of the Hindus

According to Golwalkar our ancestors had crossed over to a realm beyond what the senses could see and had discovered the ultimate reality—soul God truth reality or nothingness 'This knowledge is in the safe custody of Hindus alone It is a divine trust we may say given to the charge of Hindus by destiny Hindu society alone can fulfil this grand world mission and none else [1]

This knowledge of ours was no dry intellectual speculation it was a living thought which drove our ancestors to reach distant lands carrying the message of world brotherhood Our arms stretched as far as to America on the one side—that was long before Columbus discovered America and on the other side to China Japan Cambodia Malaya Siam Indonesia and all the South East Asian countries and right upto Mongolia and Siberia in the north Our powerful political empire too spread over the South East areas and continued for 1 400 years [2] The Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh has resolved to fulfil that age old national mission by forging as the first step the pre ent day scattered element of Hindu ociety into an organised and invincible force both on the plane of spirit and on the plane of material life Verily this is the one real practical world mission—if ever there was one [3]

2 The Enlightened Aryan Hindus

Golwalkar has his own theory about Hindus In his view sun and moon can be defined but the ultimate reality out of which they merged cannot be defined Muslims or Christians can be defined but Hindus cannot be defined The origin of our people is unknown to scholars of history In a way we are *anadi* without a beginning or we existed when there was no need for any name We were the good the enlightened people We were the people who knew about the laws of nature and the laws of spirit We had brought into the actual life almost every thing that was beneficial to mankind Then the rest of humanity

1 M S Golwalkar *Bunch of Thoughts* Pp 7 8
2 *Ibid* P 9
3 *Ibid* P 10

were just bipeds and so no distinctive name was given to us Sometimes in trying to distinguish our people from others we were called the enlightened—the Aryas—and the rest the *Mlechhas* [4] Among the vast mass of humanity it is the Hindu alone who provides the immortal hope that all is not over with the present life but there is eternal time before us to put our shoulders to the wheel, life after life and reach the destination [5]

Aryan is an old and proud name no doubt but for the past one century historians have spread poison by propogating the Aryan Dravidian controversy Hence he says, if we name ourselves Aryans it would defeat our purpose In the same way, he says Bharatiya is often understood as Indian including all the people of India—Muslims Christians Parsis and others residing in the country This will also not serve our purpose to denote our society The word Hindu alone connotes correctly and completely the meaning that we want to convey It is incorrect to say no man is born Hindu or Muslim or Christian but a simple human being In fact we are Hindus even before we emerge from the womb of our mothers We are therefore born as Hindus About the others they are born to this world as simple unnamed human beings and later on either circum cised or baptised, they become Muslims or Christians [6]

3 ' Hindu People is our God"

Golwalkar goes a step further and makes a deity of Hindus The most fundamental aspect he says is the urge for realization of supreme reality i e God But description of God as *Nirakar* and *Nirguna* or the idol worship l ads us nowhere All this does not satisfy us (RSS) who are full of activity We want a living God Some say man or humanity is our God but such an idea is too much beyond our comprehension To the RSS ' the Hindu people is our God A comparative study—even by the foreign historians and travellers of those days—tells us that the average man (i e Hindu) of this country was at one time incomparably superior to the average man of the other lands We are presently degraded because among

4 *Ibid* P 46-47
5 *Ibid* P 49
6 *Ibid*, P 119

other things : notorious film stars wallowing in depths of moral depravity are included in our cultural delegations to foreign countries This is a lurid reflection on our present degradation [7]

4 The Chosen Land An Expansionist View

If Hindu people is God what to say of the land where they stay? Golwalkar indeed dreams of an immensely glorifying picture of our land and commits something more than a cartographical aggression when he says that the men born in our glorious mother land are more blessed than the Gods them selves Our motherland is *Jagan mata* (mother of the world) *Adishakti* (original force) *Mahamaya* (great illusion) *Mahadurga* (great goddess of power) The expansive image of our mother land according to him includes our ancient *Upaganasthan* (Afghanistan) *Gandhar* (Kabul and Kandhar) even Iran was originally Aryan Its previous King Raza Shah Pehlavi was guided more by Aryanism than by Islam *Zend Avestha* the holy scripture of Parsis is mostly *Rig Veda* Burma is our ancient *Brahmadesha* Lanka (Ceylon) was never considered as anything different from the main land It was this picture of our motherland with the Himalayas dipping its arms in the two seas at Aryan (Iran) in the West and Singapur (Singapore) in the east with Lanka (Ceylon) as a lotus petal offered at her sacred feet by the southern ocean that was completely kept radiant in people s mind for so many thousands of years [8] This land of ours is *Mathrubhoomi* (motherland) *Dharmabhoomi* (land of religion) *Devabhoomi* (God s land) *Mokshabhoomi* (land of salvation) It is more than a chosen land here the people have seen God face to face Jesus Christ came across some angels and satan : The founder of Islam met only Gabriel and heard some divine voices that is all whereas in our country Shri Krishna spoke in the first person—I—as God : Sri Rama Krishna Paramahansa and Vivekananda had also seen God face to face [9] says Golwalkar

Mother concept such as the above attached to motherland

7 *Ibid* Pp 24-30
8 *Ibid*, Pp 82 83

according to him is a high state of human evolution A heart fired with such a devotion can never tolerate the slightest affront to the object of its devotion i e the motherland it takes on a terrible form and rests not till the aggressive elements responsible for the insult no more remain in a position to commit sacrilege a second time A divine discontent to undo all the past insults and humiliations burns in such a heart[10] Our history also bears witness to the fact that whenever our people became charged with the conquering spirit then all those demonic empires of the enemy were reduced to shambles ' There are some who tell us bygones are bygones what is the use of raking up old dead issues ? 'after all partition is now a settled fact How is this ever possible ? No true son can ever forget or rest till she becomes her complete whole If partition is a settled fact we are here to unsettle it Things get settled or unsettled solely by the will of man And man s will is steeled by a spirit of dedication to a cause which he knows to be righteous and glorious[11]

5 Neither Democracy Nor Socialism but Varna and Dharma

Golwalkar is a staunch advocate of the caste system He is opposed to both democracy and socialism for that matter any foreign ism He feels sorry for the fall of Brahmin in Hindu society which according to him was deliberately brought about by the Britishers Thus he presents what may be called the Golwalkarian notions of social structure in the following outline The unique picture of our society is the diverse functional groups The present day mind accustomed to viewing through foreign isms and their high sounding slogans of equality has failed to grasp this unique feature and they talk of classless society The glorious main feature which once distinguished our society was the *Varna Vyavastha* But it is being dubbed as casteism and scoffed at The feeling of inequality associated with *Varna Vyavastha* is comparatively recent The scheming Britisher accentuated it Originally *Varna Vyavastha* did not imply any discrimination There are some who never tired of propagating that caste system was responsible for our downfall

10 *Ibid* P 91
11 *Ibid* P 93

This is not true, the so called caste ridden society has remained undying and unconquerable whereas the so-called "casteless' societies crumbled at the very outset of foreign conquests [12]

Brahmins were held in great respect by the low castes who considered it their duty to bow down before them This gave Englishmen the idea unless he ousted the Brahmins from that position and occupied it himself the empire could not be lasting With this end in view the British began to distort history They said India was a continent and not a country There were aboriginals Dravidians and Aryans here The Aryan came from the North and with their might conquered this land The British education introduced by Macaulay was to make the Hindu insincere to his religion The result of all this was that the educated Hindu fell prey to the trap laid by the British to the extent that one of them said I consider it a result of my past sin that I am born in the Hindu Brahmin family [13]

Varna inequality *Dharma* and monarchy or in brief the Hindu way of life is suggested by Golwalkar as a positive solution to the challenge of the times In his view slogans like individual freedom sanctity of individual right and equality were raised as a reaction to the cruel western monarchy Under democracy common people were left high and dry and they were now groaning under the heel of the new tyranny in place of the old As a reaction to this tyranny of capitalism communism came up But communism as in Russia was not able to give two square meals medicine and accommodation to their people (!) They have reduced individuals to depths of misery

Both democracy and communism are false prophets According to our philosophy disparity is an indivisible part of nature and we have to live with it Not equality but harmony should be our motto and that can be attained when we follow *Dharma* It is like cooperation of a blind man with a lame man The lame man gets a leg and the blind man an eye What is important is moulding of man in the spirit of *Dharma* That is why in our national tradition we do not bother much about the external form of government and the monarchy in our country was found to be a highly beneficial

12 *Ibid* Pp [redacted] 120
13 *Ibid* Pp 138 141

repeated themes in the writings of Golwalkar He worships force and wants RSS to be the most powerful force According to him the basic rule of relation between nations is the law of the jungles—the *strong feeding upon the weak and getting stronger* Mutual friendship of nations is a mirage In fact to remain weak is to extend invitation to aggression and depredation by stronger foreign powers *It is the weak who are responsible for the disturbances of peace in the world* When we read the world correctly we are forced to arrive at the simple conclusion that the only basis for our free and prosperous national life is invincible national strength—a strength that will strike terror into the hearts of aggressive powers and make other nations seek our friendship Strength is the very elixir of national life Strength is virtue and weakness is sin Non violence of the weak is non violence of the imbecile *Only strong can afford to be non violent* He alone is a man who does not brook or forgive insults one who remains cold and tolerant in the face of insults is neither a male nor a female Violence is positive and non violence is negative World worships strength [27]

In Bharatiya culture martyrs are not held up as ideals For after all they failed in achieving their ideal and failure implies some total flaw in them Real greatness lies in achieving total success in life In our culture worship had been offered only to such men who finally succeeded Examples are the incarnations The true example of philosophy of victory permits killing of women or shooting the enemy from behind *just as Shri Rama killed the Rakshasi* Tratika and shot at Vali from behind a tree [28] Vanquishing *rakshasas* and establishing the kingdom of *Manavadharma* has been our tradition since hoary times Verily man s real *Purushatva*—manliness—lies in establishing his superiority over the *rakshasa* In the early days of mankind the wild animals like the present day communists were fierce and powerful but man conquered them and asserted his superiority Good or bad depends upon the ultimate victory of forces of *Dharma* and establishing righteousness all over the world

27 *Ibid* P 239 54
28 *Ibid* Pp 260-265

which has been our national life mission since ages [9]

Consistent with his above views in the context of the Indo Pakistan war Golwalkar says Indeed it would have been highly desirable if China had followed up its ultimatum and invaded our country That would have given our fighting forces a golden opporunity to make China lick the dust and to wash off the stigma of defeat and dishonour attached to our name in our last encounter with China The world would then have witnessed the supreme heights of our Bharatiya heroism for *what fun is merely fighting a petty power like Pakistan?* In fact *we should heartily pray for such a war* though we are traditionally incurable lovers of peace and not warmongers [30]

(B) A Critique

1 Revivalist Activism and History

In the foregoing ideas of Golwalkar two different but interdependent attempts have been made The first is of a theoretical nature whether he is aware of it or not to create a distinctive Hindu historical consciousness It has been said that apart from curiosity and intellectualized nostalgia the predominent factors that create the consciousness of history have been the search for identity and the quest for meaning [31] By establishing ones identity it helps a people to link their past with the present and by knowing the meaning they are able to project the present into the future Through such an effort Golwalkar seems to be aiming at the creation of a powerful partisan historical perspective which could be employed to mesmerize the people into an activist movement which would transform the society into a communal Utopia of his own aspiration

The second attempt in his writings is the one that concerns facts of history He seems to present half truths and totally wrong and fictitious facts as the basis for propping up the type of consciousness of history that he wants to create Let us first

29 *Ibid* Pp 265 67
30 *Ibid* Pp 310 312
31 John T Marcus History and the Indian World View (in *Contemporary India* Ed B N Varma, P 2)

examine his grand theme which provides the Hindus with the sense of historical being

The first and foremost attempt is to create a feeling that we have a special world mission a divine trust given to the charge of Hindus by destiny Then the people are glorified as the all knowing enlightened Aryans compared to the remaining *Mlechhas* of the world The greatness of the motherland is romanticized and extended to include neighbouring countries of Afghanistan Burma Ceylon Singapore Iran and others Thus an image is implanted of great and unparalleled people who have recently fallen The people responsible for our degradation the Muslims the British and presently the Congress leadership are pointed out But our immortal country has a capacity to survive and counter every aggressor In presenting such a historical picture of ours he uses frequent illustrations from mythological stories and legends the ethos of our culture is depicted as an activist aggressive violent and unhesitating to use any means for the righteous cause of one s country that is Hindusthan and not India World domination and extra territorial ambitions are projected as our destiny or world mission Evidently the attempt is to create a distorted Hindu collective consciousness on the basis of perverted history and to employ it for the purpose of Hinduization

Now it is well known that history can provide values as well as goals It provides community with an ethos and individual units a place it explains the origins of the group and transmits a changing but recognizable identity through succession of generations Thus the sense of historical being provides unity in experience and continuity in time [32] No doubt history is a significant and effective instrument of manipulation of human minds And it can be used for the good of mankind Unfortunately Golwalkar employs it not for unity but for split In the name of Hinduism or Indianness each one of the categories he employs for the advancement of a partisan historical vision is non Hindu including the very use of history for this purpose Hindus had no historical consciousness—history came to us through Chinese travellers Muslims and lately the Westerners The use of history as being and becoming in a teleological

32 *Ibid* P 5

sense is messianic and western This has been adopted by Indians particularly during the post British period as a device of activism for the purpose of moulding the future The ideas of world mission and exclusively chosen people and other egoistic assertions are foreign to Hindus—at least not in the main current of Hindu thought The Hindus who recognized the truth of all religions and tolerated them all could never be that *self righteous as Golwalkar is to declare the world mission* of establishing their own ***Dharma*** Hindus cultivated and preached selflessness and subordination of one s ego Similarly the activist ethos the end justifies means morality and intole rance of others is not at all Indian Hence both his methodology and facts in the main are not true of Hindus moreover the purpose for which he is employing these devices is thoroughly questionable as we shall see later

The colonialists the racist Nazis who preached Aryan supremacy and the aggressive religious movements whom Gol walkar accuses of converting people at the point of sword had all their own brand of world mission The colonialists believed that they were the chosen people to rule over the vast areas of the world whereas the Nazis with their nordic superiority had assumed that the fittest thing was their survival at the cost of eliminating the rest In other words when he talks about the world mission and pledges a para military organisation like the RSS to its fulfilment people will have every reason to be scared about it All those who talked in the past about their world mission in this fashion have brought ruin and bloodshed to their motherlands

To fortify this mission he tries to bring about great awe and mystification to our origin by calling ourselves *anadi* nameless enlightened all knowing and discovering Aryans while others were *Mlechhas* and bipeds in the world This is not historically true There were great civilizations—the Egyptian the Mesopotamian and the Chinese not to speak of the Greek Pyramids were built around 3 000 B C Hamurabi s law in Baby lonia dates back to more than 2 000 B C whereas Mohanjodaro is dated 2 900 B C and the coming of Aryans to 1 600 B C and the origin of the *Vedas* to 1 000 B C to 800 B C It is a blas phemy on the people of the neighbouring civilizations to say that they were merely bipeds when we were calling ourselves Aryans

and the rest *Mlechhas* It is an established fact of history that several Aryans and other tribes came into this country and that we had a well developed Pre Aryan civilization in the Indus Valley which was destroyed by the invaders And because of this Indra has been called Purandar (destroyer of city) and in the words of Wheeler on circumstancial evidence Indra stands accused for the destruction of the Indus Valley cities and citadels[33] Golwalkar has no value for all this although historians and Archaeologists like R P Chanda Gordan Child and Piggot have all pointed in this direction

History archaeology anthropology and ancient literary sources have all established beyond a shadow of doubt that our country is a racial mosaic composed of various tribes and races some came from outside and some were earlier here This composite nature of our culture and its origin is an incontro vertible fact and yet Golwalkar makes a valiant effort to suppress this historical truth and calls the whole of this country Aryan According to him even Dravidians are Aryans for he says The people in the south were always considered to be as much Aryans as those in the north Even if the concept of Aryan and Dravidian were taken to mean as language culture or race this assertion is absolutely false Yet he makes another such fantastic claim when he says that all Indian languages are originating from Sanskrit Golwalkar is a talented organiser and undoubtedly a great drill master but what claim has he got to dabble with anthropology and linguistics is not known *Tamil and other South Indian languages are not* Indo Aryan nor do the Austric and Sino Tibetan family of languages spoken by the various people of India belong to the Indo Aryan group Racism seems to permeate his thought and so he says referring to Iran (which he calls Aryan) that its previous *King Raza Shah Pehlavi was guided more* by Aryanism than by Islam The world knows only one Aryanism that was of Hitler s Germany and incidentally the concept of Aryanism which Golwalkar equates with Hinduism or even Brahminism is not at all different from that of the Fuerher s ideas

In furtherance of his scheme of creating a restrictive and parochial historical consciousness among the people Golwalkar introduces peculiar concepts of nation God and national terri

33 S Piggot *Prehistori India* Pp 260-62

ory He really wants to take the name of Aryan but he curses the historians for letting this name fall into disrepute recently and examines the term *Bharatiya* This too is not good because of the feeling that all people belonging to Bharat are *Bharatiya* He does not consider that all people belonging to Bharat constitute the nation and hence Hindu alone is the nation His arguments in defence of this theory are 1) Muslims and Christians are invaders 2) Others like Parsis and Jews are refugees 3) Non Hindus mainly Muslims and Christians identify themselves with foreign countries—their sacred places customs and heroes are foreign 4) Such minorities do not share the traditional customs and practices of India nor do they share the Indian philosophy and accept the Indian heroes

Now the overwhelming majority of Muslims are Hindu converts and a microscopic few might be d scendants of the invaders Even this latter category has nothing to do with invasion they have been a part of the country for almost a millenium and the charge that their forefathers came as invaders could not be laid at their door If this charge is raked up it could very well apply to all those invaders who came to this country including the Aryan invaders And to say that Christians came to this country as invaders is nothing short of falsification of history Christians had spread in this country during the time of St Thomas in the first century and had been thriving upon the generosity and help of the Hindus who had gifted them large area of land and other properties for the maintenance of church almost in the same fashion of gifting property to Brahmins and temples And people from the invading Christian countries never came to settle down here The present Christian population almost wholly are converts from Hindus to Christianity They had changed their religion for the love of social freedom or economic benefits if not for the love of religion The force that drove them away to Christianity was the caste system and its indignities and other obnoxious customs of the Hindus In other words the very *varna* system which Golwalkar praises skyhigh has rung the death knell of Hindu society It has been shown by an eminent scholar that large scale conversion to Christianity took place in Kerala only after the eighteenth Century when the tyranny of upper caste landlordism began to deprive the status and

and the rest *Mlechhas* It is an established fact of history that several Aryans and other tribes came into this country and that we had a well developed Pre Aryan civilization *in the Indus* Valley which was destroyed by the invaders And because of this Indra has been called Purandar (destroyer of city) and in the words of Wheeler on circumstancial evidence Indra stands accused *for the destruction of the Indus Valley cities* and citadels [33] Golwalkar has no value for all this although historians and Archaeologists like R P Chanda Gordan Child and Piggot have all pointed in this direction

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33 S Pie ot *Prehistori India* Pp 260-62

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communalist who stood for the partition of the motherland and the Hindu communalist who stands to undo it merrily sailing in the same boat In fact Golwalkar on the basis of his Hindu nation theory has made it explicit that his concept of nation extends to all those areas with which Hindus had historical and cultural links or religious links Since the mythological Gandahri was brought from Kabul and Khandhar area the place became Hindu and since our places of pilgrimage or places of mythological significance are in neighbouring countries such places became Hindu If we proceed in this direction we may have to claim even far off places like Mexico because the official history of that country refers to those who first arrived on the continent later to be known as Americans were group of men driven by that mighty current that set from India towards the East It is said that there are images of Ganesh Hanuman and Hindu temple architecture with lotus inscriptions in that country [35]

Golwalkar also probably repeats the claim that Hindus had discovered America long before Columbus reached there If we go into such pre historic or even early historic movements of people as a basis for any type of claim for modern nationhood irrespective of the fact that such claims are made upon neighbouring countries or far off lands we shall place ourselves in a vicious circle of claims and counter claims because there were arrivals and departures of people all over the world Where will all this lead us? To the war front or to the graveyard ? Let us hope that the Buddhists in foreign countries do not show this Golwalkarian propensity lest they might claim the whole of India as their territory The advent of Buddhism was in fact the only true commencement of Indian History [36]

His marvellous concept of religious nationhood and opposition to territorial nationalism will not merit any scrutiny because on the face of it it is quixotic irrational and impracticable Not only will it make intercontinental religious nations without boundary but will also put the sovereignty of states into utter confusion and will make it an impossible exercise

35 Chamanlal *Who Discovered America* See Review by K K G in *Bharat Jyoti* 25 11 1951
36 T J Wheeler *India Vedic and Post Vedic* P 2

2 The Drying and Drifting Mainstream

Another substantial charge of Golwalkar against the non Hindus is that they do not share the traditional customs practices philosophy and national (Hindu) heroes? This is the only point in which Golwalkar can claim that there was an element of truth in his statement But the question is do the Hindus share in all those items? There are drastic differences among Shaivits Vaishnavits Sanatanis and Arya Samajists In fact the declaration that Aryan cannot prefer the domination of idol worshipping Hindus or cow slaughtering Muslims to the enlightened and tolerant rule of England [37] had made this point quite clear When a large number or even a majority of Hindus donot believe in or justify the rigid caste system or its proscriptions and prescriptions or even do not accept the *Karma* theory and its fatalism now (there are many indications that Hindus contrary to the Hindu view of *Nishkama Karma* are working hard to acquire wealth and are desiring profitable results in the economic and other activities) how can anyone say to others that they should follow the Hindu customs The main theme of the Hindu world view is renunciation and asceticism whereas in the changing scheme of values this has become merely proverbial

The type of activism that Golwalkar advocates or the RSS advocates is far from being typical of Hindus is almost foreign to them His sectarian attitude the ideas that it is a sin to be weak his stress on war against piece his intolerance and the burning desire to take revenge as well as his view that one who does not retaliate is neither woman nor man or his aversion to extend his love to humanity and preference for the exclusive worship of Hindus as a deity are all extremely revolting to the tolerance and catholicity of Hindus to put it in a nutshell Golwalkarism is anything but Hinduism Is it not an irony that the one who accuses others of not being in the mainstream of national (i e Hindu) life is himself far away from it?

From the above discussion one can get at the root of his distrust of non Hindus and also his accusation of them of not being in the mainstream Firstly we have seen that he identifies himself with foreign countries in the name of Hindu sacred places and historical memories and has an expansionist scheme to which

37 Ram Munshi, *Arya Samaj and Politics* P 12

he is pledged Such a man is bound to suspect others of similar intentions and likely to project his mental state unto them This explains his frequent concern and worry that the non Hindus lack identity with the mainstream and are not patriotic Secondly he has adopted an activist aggressive and un Hindu approach which is far from the mainstream of the Hindu outlook And this outlook must necessarily clash with the traditional Hindu outlook which is bound to be a part of the mental luggage of a man of his age and scriptural knowledge

This dualism in him produces a sense of guilt because the traditionalist in him must necessarily accuse the activist—the one who has drifted away from the mainstream and has become *Ahindu* in a sense Thus the burden of guilt that generates in the course of this dialectic of incompatible perspectives within is easily transferred and projected to the non Hindus and a false alarm is raised that others are not in the mainstream Whether others are or not it really means that the guilty one feels that he is not in the mainstream Moreover the extreme secrecy and anti intellectual atmosphere of the RSS does not permit the necessary avenues for the release of tension through free and frank discussions and therefore their organisational structure only heightens the Paranoid complex

So if Golwalkar and his RSS Jana Sangh complex is not in the mainstream of the Hindu life and the modernizing and chan ging vast sections of Hindus who have denounced and broken the traditional caste restrictions and are no more believers in their *Swadharma* and *Karma* fatalism as they are on the way to mobility and dynamism where does the mainstream exist to which the prodigal sons are to return to make it possible for Golwalkar to celebrate a grand Dewali ! To ask the non Hindus to follow customs philosophies death rites celebrations and heroes which the Hindus themselves have given up or are giving up is irrelevant in the extreme in the year in which we are celebrating the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar Hindus have given up the restrictions put on widow remarriage abandoned sati and female infanticide and many more outmoded customs and rites related to marriage and family life People are taking to electric crematorium registered marriages and inter-caste marriages are becoming common even completely secular self respect marriages are

the welfare of the masses—be it nationalization of banks or abolition of privy purse or any other matter

Ethics of the Jungle

Golwalkar's ethics is much more interesting than his politics and sociology. Often one's choice of words are revelations of one's outlook. His phrases such as *the so called freedom fight*, *incurable lovers of peace*, *what fun in fighting a petty power*, *I earnestly pray for war*, *world worships the strong*, *strength is virtue and weakness is sin*, *Aryanism* and the frequent use of *Hindu alone* to cite a few examples should throw light upon the working of his mind. Next to this his illustrations and examples are full of suggestive techniques which indicate his norms and values. If properly understood his demons, demonesses and *mlechhas* in the context, are either non Hindus—especially *Muslims and other minorities, non Brahminical castes and* tribes—or Congressmen and Communists. His constant exhortations to fight these evil forces by telling that vanquishing *rakshasas* have been our tradition since hoary times and manliness lies in establishing superiority over the *rakshasas* and his justification that in the case of fighting *rakshasas* or evil forces any stealthy measure can be adopted such as *shooting from behind or killing women are startling to the* normal Hindus but that is in the game of activist ethics that Golwalkar has developed and wants others to pass it as the message of Hinduism! This is how he wants to establish righteousness all over the world which he thinks has been our national life mission since ages! Yet another technique employed is to quote national leaders, Mahatma Gandhi and Nehru *without naming them* and abuse them as cowards and traitors. For having said, no swaraj without Hindu Muslim unity, Gandhiji is called a traitor of course, meanwhile Golwalkar has reserved his right to accuse the minorities for not respecting the national heroes!

Communists and Socialists are accused of being materialists though his writings betray his ignorance of what materialism was. Yet his theory Hindus are our God is in the *same*

39 P A Sorokin *Contemporary Sociological Theories* Pp 463 80

category of French Sociologist Durkheim s theory of collective representation according to which God is nothing but a personification of society and the power of God is the power of the people And it will be interesting to know that Durkheim was authoritatively considered as a sociological materialist [139] Moreover even though Golwalkar is critical of those who believe in the end justifies means approach he himself is a strong follower of this dictum so much so that he justifies shoot ing enemies men and women from behind by illustrating the murder of demons and demonesses by Rama According to Golwalkar s own admission when Shivaji s Muslim artillery chief was serving him against Aurangzeb it was proper and when Jaya Singh the famous Sardar of Aurangzeb refused to betray the emperor by changing sides as requested by Shivaji and felt contented with his loyalty to the emperor and devotion to God in the eye of Golwalkar it becomes dangerous and perverted notion of personal integrity and loyalty [1] It may be mentioned here that this line of communal ethics of the activists in India was propagated by Tilak in Maharashtra when he founded Shivaji Mela and stoutly defended the killing of Afzal Khan by Shivaji in contravention to the recognized standard of conduct in war [40] We shall also see in the next chapter the fact that Hedgewar the founder of the RSS was a devotee of Tilak and was thoroughly frustrated after the death of Tilak when Gandhiji emerged as a new type of leader

Double standard of morality is writ large on the views of Golwalkar He is a severe critic of the National Flag which he thinks does not represent any basic principle of the real nation Naturally according to him it is Bhagawa Dhwaj which has been the highest the noblest and the truest symbol of our nationhood Though he denies any disloyalty to the flag one cannot but get the impression that he is disloyal to the Indian National Flag which he seems to think has created an utter vacuum in our minds However he has no qualms in ques tioning others of their loyalty to the nation which surely must include the loyalty to the flag He is also opposed to the consti tution of India because it is not genuinely Indian (Hindu?) he

40 See next Chapter and also Parvate *Op Cit* p 128

condescendingly quotes the criticism that it does not refer to Tilak s concepts like swaraj and Dharma raj While the goings on this side are like this the RSS and the Jana Sangh have *no hesitation to accuse others* who are not in agreement with the provisions of the Constitution be they communists members of the DMK or some others

If any further proof is necessary to show his ethical qualities his reaction to the election of a Muslim candidate may be cited Inconceivable suicidal and self oblivious of our society are the words used by Golwalkar to express his shock at the election of a lone Muslim from the Ambala constituency in 1957—where all the voters except the candidate were non Muslims Indeed the democratic conscience of Hindu and Sikh voters of that constituency must have been shocked at the depravity of a mind which seems to speak on behalf of a religion which believed in the principles of *Vasudhana Kutumbakam* (the whole world is a family) and let light come from all corners of the world If the election of a mere Muslim legislator were *so shocking then one can only guess what could have been* their attitude towards the former President of our Republic who was a Muslim Could such people be loyal to a state headed by a Muslim?

From the discussion so far the following things should be clear

1 Golwalkar stands for greatness glory world mission white heat of patriotism *Dharma raj* and all these strictly confined to Hindus

2 In the total assessment of his views the Hindu shows tendency to shrink into the confines of upper castes or Brahminical caste

3 He preaches use of violence and destruction of the traitors to Hindu society The term traitor is broad enough to include Gandhiji Nehru and the bulk of all those who participated in to use his own expression the so called freedom movement and preached Hindu Muslim unity besides communists westernized Indians people associated with the Bhoodan Movement minorities and tribal people would also come into its ambit

4 His techniques of destruction permit employment of any means provided it leads to the success of the Hindus who are variously described as Devas Aryas *Manas* or as the people

who have been charged with a mission to establish righteousness all over the world

In this connection it is interesting to note that Golwalkar is a worshipper of success No nonsense of *Nishkama Karma* here He says Real greatness lies in achieving total success in life [41] He also expresses the view that only such successful people were the object of worship according to our tradition or in other words the Hindu society was achievement oriented May be the world will laugh at his views but that is what he says His ethics neatly fits in with his idea of success for the worshippers of success how one succeeds is immaterial all that matters is that nothing succeeds like success At last the glorification of Hinduism has led to this pitiable state of American brand of Hindu activism because it is in that country that the worst form of achievement orientation is to be found

Gandhism vs Golwalkarism

It has been made clear that Golwalkarism does not represent the main current of Indian thought Its immoral activist ethics it s narrow outlook its non humanitarian anti democratic feudal world view lacking in catholicism of the traditional Hindus and its maniac like craze and prayer for war and violence its egoism and power hunger are proofs which clearly suggest that Golwalkarism is un Indian At best it represents a minor strain of India s contemporary aberration—the making of which began in the context of the British occupation and the anti reform movement In this respect Gandhism is in striking contrast to it it represents the major ethos of our culture and carries forth the historical consciousness of a people who were varied in race and religion and had long drawn struggles and strifes out of which they had developed a composite culture and its ideological derivatives of tolerance catholicity selflessness and simplicity But for this world view the diverse elements which were the constituents of our evolving nation in that ancient past could not have had their survival in the context of vagaries of man and nature Hence this was also the sustaining force of our national survival And therefore Gandhiji s views were essentially in tune with our history and ethos of our culture,

41 M S Golwalkar *Op Cit* P 262

ideological kins of the East and the West A comparative account of the salient features of these systems may be indicated below

	HITLERISM	GOLWALKARISM
1	*Weltanschauung* Aggressive and totalitarian which according to Mein Kampf is intolerant and cannot permit *another to exist side by side* with it It imperiously demands its own recognition as unique and exclusive and a complete transformation in accordance with its views throughout *all the* branches of public life [47]	*Weltanschauung* Aggressive totalitarian Believes that ancient Hindu way of life—its customs rites beliefs and heroes as in*terpreted by Golwalkar—is the* only legitimate way of life in India No other pattern tolerated those who differ from it are traitors
2	*Parliamentary democracy* Political parties in parliamentary democracy make compromises and are opportunists	*Parliamentary democracy* Political parties in parliamentary democracy make compromises and are opportunists
3	*Volk Staat* Only the Aryans are real folk or community governed by aristocratic principles within the community *The ordinary con*cept of State based on economic and political needs of people including all the people of the State territory is absurd Race is the foun*dation of the state*	*Hindu Nation* Hindu (Aryans) governed by the principles of caste system are the nation and none else Territorial natio*nalism* which looks upon all the people—refugees like parsis and invaders like Muslims and Christians as part of the nation —is absurd Hindu is the positive content of nationhood
4	*Germanisation* True Germanization is possible only if that process could change the blood of the people" Since this is im	*Indianisation or Hinduisation* is possible because it is a matter of changing of life's outlook customs gods and celebrations The race and blood is the same

possible and mixture of blood would lead to debasement of superior race it is opposed	and hence it must be done
5 *Aggressiveness and Scapegotism* Jews have undermined the German civilization Ideas like democracy majority conscience of the world world solidarity world peace etc disintegrate our race consciousness and breed cowardice [48]	*Aggressiveness and Scapegoatism* Muslims Christians and Communists etc are undermining the country Ideas like internationalism equality world unity coexistence neutrality Hindu Muslim unity peace non violence are damaging the Hindu nation and making us a nation of imbeciles and cowards
6 *Vengeance* Jew has to be made powerless Germans cannot be friends to traitors We demand vengeance [49]	*Vengeance* Minorities especially the Muslims are not to be pampered lest they might harm the nation a second time They should be told that Moghul Badshahi is over We cannot forget or forgive the insult to the motherland We are here to unsettle the partition
7 *Population Control* Opposition to practical prevention of procreation among millions of our best people while it is possible for the most depraved degenerates to propogate themselves	*Population Control* Opposition to population control among the Hindus while the Muslims are propagating themselves indiscriminately and thus endangering the Hindu nation [50]
8 *Racial Ethics* An ethical ideal has no right to prevail if it endangers the existence of a race that is the	*Racial Ethics* Ethical ideas like personal character and *Dharma* should be made subordinate to the cause of Hindu society If

48 Adolf Hitler *My New Order* P 45

49 *Ibid.* P 45

50 The theme of a speech delivered to RSS audience by a provincial boss

standard bearer of a higher ethical ideal For in a world which would be composed of mongrels and negroids all ideals of human beauty and nobility and all hopes for an idealized future for our humanity would be lost for ever [51]

it were in the service of Hindus anything can be done irrespective of moral standards like truthfulness and loyalty The *Rakshasas Mlechhas* and traitors should be destroyed by any means to establish righteousness all over the world [52]

Thus we see that Golwalkarism is not Hinduism but it is Hitlerism under the Hindu garb It has grown under different conditions and naturally makes use of Indian history and culture as its instruments of propaganda As the country becomes more and more industrial and technological Golwalkarism is likely to grow fangs and its probability of dragging the nation to most pernicious adventures is very likely Knowing this propensity of the RSS Jana Sangh ideology and the social movement they run those forces—internal and external—interested in obstructing the path of progressive development of this country and its democratic and socialist aspirations might lend a helping hand to Golwalkarism so that their vested interest may be protected at the cause of the emerging people of India and their future

51 Adolf Hitler *Mein Kampf* P 321

52 M S Golwalkar *Op Cit* P 376 and many other pages

Note All the quotations attributed to Golwalkar appearing in this chapter and without reference are also from his Bunch of thoughts Ideas of his appearing within inverted comas are in summary form

CHAPTER V

The RSS-Jana Sangh Complex

Ideology and Social Circle

So far we have dealt with the various ideological tenets of Golwalkarism But a proper appreciation of an ideology is impossible unless we know the social circle with which it is linked up The men of knowledge and their products (ideologies) can hardly be assessed without an acquaintance of the circle to which the creators of such ideologies belong Every social role presupposes that between the individual performing the role and a smaller or larger set of people who participate in his performance and may be termed his social circle there is a common bond constituted by a complex of values which all of them appreciate positively [1] This approach will help us to know the thoughts of a man in the context of his public or organization or even cultural segment to which he belongs The inner circle to which Golwakar belongs is the RSS and the outer one is the Jana Sangh The RSS and through RSS the Jana Sangh has a common pedigree that apparently is the militant activism generated in Maharashtra after the fall of the Peshwas Shiv Sena also derives inspiration from the same source of Shivaji cult yet born under an entirely different setting and leadership it may more appropriately be considered an illegitimate offspring of that revivalism

1 Florian Znaniecki *Social Role and the Social Circle* Coser and Rosenberg—Sociological Theory—P 347

The circumstance in which Dr Hedgewar founded the RSS gives a significant insight into the source of the movement and its ideology Hedgewar was a thoroughly frustrated man after the termination of the Swaraj movement He found that the long cherished ambition of freedom was not so easy to achieve and lost faith in the method of the movement and its capabilities to secure freedom Added to this was the fact that after the death of Lokmanya Tilak the leadership of the movement passed into the experimentative hands of Mahatma Gandhi who was a Gujrati In fact the tendency of Maharashtrian militant Hindu revivalism is evident in the original prayer of the RSS couched in mixed Marathi and Hindi languages ending Samarth Guru Ram Das ki jai Guru Ram Das was the teacher of emperor Shivaji[2] One of the six festivals which the RSS celebrates in *Hindu Samrajya Dinotsava* (Hindu Empire Day celebration) This is in memory of the coronation of Shivaji Hedgewar was a devotee of Shivaji and his regard for Lokmanya Tilak was so deep that once in a meeting a speaker made some indecent remark about him (Tilak) he got up and quickly gave a resounding slap in his face [3]

This strong affinity of RSS founder to Tilak is not only personal but much more ideological Hindu militant activism at least in Maharashtra was centered around Tilak He was the founder of the Ganapati festival Shivaji Mela and it was during Shivaji Mela that he and his associates propounded a new code of militant activist morality with regard to Shivaji s killing of Afzal Khan Tilak declared Let us even assume that Shivaji deliberately planned and executed the murder was the act good or evil The laws which bind society are for common folk like you or me No one seeks to trace the geneology of a Rishi or to fasten guilt upon a Maharaja Great men are above the principles of morality It was in a praiseworthy object that he murdered Afzal Khan for the good of others [4] We have already referred to Tilak s oppostion to social reformers and his

2 S B Saxena Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh in *Sociologist* Vol III 1960
3 S B Saxena *A Study of RSS*—Thesis (Unpublished) P 16 Agra University
4 Quoted by T V Parvate *Bal Gangadhar Tilak* P 128

orthodox outlook towards social change [5] Tilak b longed to the Chitpavan Brahmin caste to which the Peshwas belonged and ruled the Maratha Empire for a century At this stage a brief reference to Chitpavan caste would help us to understand the genesis of revivalism

The Chitpavan Background

The Chitpavan Brahmins were a small group of farmers and priests settled in the Ratnagiri district A history of the Bene Israelis who settled in the Colaba district of Konkan claim Chitpavans as fellow Jews who became separated from the ship mates [6] Traditionally Chitpavans explain their origin on the basis of the story in *Sahyadri Khanda* which goes like this at that time the bodies of fourteen shipwrecked foreigners were cast upon the shore of the sea Parasurama purified those corpses by burning them on a funeral pyre or chita restored them to life and taught them Brahmin rites [7] Hence they became Chitpavans This Brahminical tradition in a way corroborates their probable Jewish origin Predominance of blue eyes fair complexion and other physical features have made the anthropologists and historians think of their foreign origin The Konkan was known for its trade contact with almost all countries of the west It is this stretch of coast too which received at one time or another such emmigrant groups as the Bene Israel Parsis Kudaldeskar Brahmins Gaud Saraswat Brahmins and Chitpavan Brahmins each of these groups has been an intrusive group physically and culturally and differentiated from the others as well as from the population into which they came The Chitpavans were apparently the last to arrive [8] However they were an unknown and obscure group until about 1707 A D when one of them gradually got the favours of the Maratha king Shahu (grandson of Shivaji) and finally rose to the position of a Peshwa or Prime Minister The appointment of Balaji Vishwanath Bhat as Peshwa was a turning point in the history of Chitpavans their fortune changed from obscurity to limelight

5 See Chapter III
6 Linda Cox *The Illustrated Weekly of India* 22 2 1970 Chitpavans
7 L P Maureen Patterson in *Structure and Change in Indian Society* Editors Singer and Kohn P 399
8 *Ibid* P 399

rather than genuine desire to contribute towards history More over contribution to history in this case also means establishment of self identity and drawing a favourable meaning out of history in terms of one s own role In both ways it amounts to the same meaning of deriving ego satisfaction

Thus the ideological trend which we call activist revivalism had developed in a specific socio cultural setting The contributory factors in the situation which gave birth to it are

(1) A small minority rather s gregated from the rest and only forming one fifth of the local Brahmins and one per cent of the total population in Maharashtra

(2) The rise of such a class into almost the usur pation of power and status in Maharashtra and this was not at all to the liking of others

(3) Rebellion and revolt of Chitpavans against the British when they lost their power and freedom

(4) To the above objective situation we may add a subjective require ment of strategy to involve more and more people in the fight against the British under the changed conditions For this purpose communalist and revivalist appeal was naturally found handy as Tilak and others employed it Because of this the ideology achieved an all India dimension as anti British Hindu revivalist activism and subseqently it showed a capacity to float away from its native soil in search of new areas where it could get easily rooted

While the core of the Chitpavan ideology was activist revivalism it would be highly unfair to the great men who came from the very same stock to say that it represented the whole community Famous men like Mahadeo Govind Ranade Gopal Krishna Gokhale Agarkar Maharishi Karve Achyut Patwardhan and Acharya Vinoba Bhave stood for change in varying degrees from liberal transformation to revolution They indicate the modern and the dynamic phase

From Hindu Mahasabha to the RSS

The course of activist revivalism ■ on the following lines The reaction developed among the Chitpavans found its expression as a centrifugal force in the person of Tilak later it descended upon Savarkar as the ideology of Hindu Mahasabha The strictly regional and caste character of this ideology was

elevated to the national level as it was also inspired by the ideas of Bipin Chandra Pal of Bengal and Lala Lajpat Rai of the Punjab Thus the Mahasabha leadership as a whole had close relationship with the Lal Bal Pal trio of the pre Gandhian Congress However The Maharashtrian group claimed political descent from Tilak This group included Moonje Jayakar N C Kelkar and most important Vinayak Damodar Savarkar Like Tilak most of the Maharashtrian contingent were Chitpavan Brahmins and indeed as will be seen many of the leaders of RSS also belong to this community [12] It is not only a question of caste or regional association that prevails between Mahasabha and the RSS but in terms of ideology and programme there is great affinity between them The idea of organizing Hindus attachment to gymnasia defence of Hindu interest through every means popularization of Hindi and celebrating Hindu festivals[13] are but a few of the common factors which link up RSS and Jana Sangh with Hindu Mahasabha

The RSS Jana Sangh Complex

It is needless to say that the RSS represents an ideological continuity of revivalist activism which was brought up and nursed by such men like Tilak Savarkar and others Basically Maharashtrian Brahminical and particularly Chitpavan in character it could not have spread to the wider realms as it has but for the adjustments it had to make to develop it into an all India organization mainly by feeding upon the communal prejudices of Hindus and also catering to the primary interests of young men for physical exercises and brotherhood

The obvious purpose of the RSS is firstly to indoctrinate the younger people in the irrational and sectarian ideas of Golwalkarism and secondly to impart to them a para military training and thirdly to retain them as an ever growing organization They try to influence the society in the manner of a concentric circle and spread out to wider and wider realms

12 Craig Baxter *The Jana Sangh* Philadelphia 1969 P 18

13 See the programmes of Hindu Mahasabha at Calcutta Session of 1925 under the Presidentship of Lala Lajpat Rai A Review of the History and Work of the Hindu Mahasabha and Hindu Sangathan Movement by Indra Prakash. I 37

Peripheral organizations like the *Gohatya Nirodh Samiti Shishu Mandirs Bharthya Vidyalayas* which hold their annual camp under huge posters of Shivaji and other pantheons of the RSS the Akhil Bhartiya Vidhyarthi Parishad the Akhil Bhartiya Mazdoor Sangh and news agencies like Hindusthan Samachar are reported to be RSS ancillaries And of all the organizations run by the RSS the biggest and the widest is Jana Sangh itself Investigations have found that common people now do not differentiate between the RSS and the Jana Sangh Though sometimes the Jana Sangh seem to shun in public too much closeness with the RSS it is understood that Shyama Prasad Mukerjee had close consultations with Golwalkar before he founded the Jana Sangh In the 1952 General Elections the whole machinery of the RSS was geered to the election work of the Jana Sangh Once when the former Jana Sangh President Pandit Mouli Chandra Sharma resented the tendency of RSS workers to dominate the Jana Sangh at the Jodhpur session of the Jana Sangh (1954) a resolution was passed condemning his view Many pracharaks of the RSS have become important office bearers of the Jana Sangh [14] A sincere research student who at the time of collecting the data was himself an RSS man says that It has also been learnt that RSS leaders have often declared amongst its workers that Jana Sangh is a mouth organ being played in political field by RSS and till it is played let them play with it or otherwise it will be destroyed [15]

There is so much of evidence to show that the Jana Sangh was founded with the initiative of the RSS after the ban following the assasination of Mahatma Gandhi was lifted At that juncture many prominent RSS men felt the need for a political front Hence there appeared a number of articles in *Organiser* commonly known as the mouthpiece of the RSS Sangh (RSS) must give lead to the country in regard to the political and economic problems of the country as well wrote Balraj Madhok The editor of *Organiser* K R Malkani wrote that the only way to restore *dharma* was by putting the shoulder to the political wheel There were also articles pointing out the futility of the then existing parties and suggesting that if they failed the RSS might heed a call from the nation Again editor Malkani

14 B B Saxena *Op Cit* Pp 190 193
15 *Ibid* Pp 193 194

writing during this period on the programe for a new party based on Hindutva claimed that Communism can be combated and conquered in Hindustan by the Hindus only through Hindutva ' Malkani also proposed that the Swayam Sevaks should man such a party [16] Golwalkar admitted this when he said that I choose some of my collegues staunch and tried workers who could self lessly and unflinchingly shoulder the burden of founding the new party [17] This shows that the Jana Sangh is nothing but the RSS under a political mask and the claim that the RSS is a cultural organization is never seriously made even by Golwalkar !

The indoctrination process of the RSS is technically perfect It works through narration of stories and games often politically oriented such as *Kashmir aur Goa kis ka hai Pratap ka Chetak* and so on *Baithaks* or meetings are an important channel of communicating the RSS ideas to the members It is significant that in such meetings taking notes is not allowed and wherever this rule is broken such notes are recovered from the Swayam Sevak and torn off Particulary in officers camps this is observed with utmost vigilance Secrecy prevails everywhere whether it is regarding collection of funds through *Guru Dakshina* activities in the camps or announcement of a meetings Great secrecy is maintained in camps where only on the basis of uttering pass words entry is permitted at night Once in one of the camps a member fell seek and died The matter was kept away from the knowledge of other participants of the camp as a secret Simlarly there is a practice of organising sudden attacks upon the camps without the knowledge of defence officer of the camps or the guards In one such instance at Lucknow the RSS men dressed as Muslims attacked the defence officer and over powered him and tied him to a tree The guards were taken unawares There are also provisons of a court martial in cases of indiscipline in the the camps Officers training camps are a a big affair to which the largest number of swayam Sevaks are attracted The Swayam Sevaks are subjected to three year officer training course which combines both physical and ideological training including training in public speaking The O T C is of three years annually held at different places though the third

16 See for more details—Craig Baxter *Op Cit* Pp 54 60
17 Quoted *Ibid* P 69

year course is always held at Nagpur In these camps in the second year according to the RSS terminology lathi (shatpatti) 11 hand javeline 18 hand sword 31 hand knife 19 hand and fighting techniques are all taught Sword training is given even in the first year Prior to the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi rifle training also used to be given [18]

The RSS claims that during the process of partition among other services rendered to the Hindus in Pakistan was included the use of hand grenades gun powder and rifles wherever necessary in saving the Hindus They also claimed to have trained people in the use of modern arms and ammunition and sent RSS troops on trains carrying Hindu refugees Saving of the Kashmir Maharaja from a *coup* planned by Muslims collaborating with the Indian Army in the early phase of the war in Kashmir liberation of Nagar Haveli and Dadri by Vishnath Narvane (a former student of Lucknow University) with a band of 90 RSS boys drawn from Bombay are cited among the exploits of the RSS [19] At a recent press conference to refute the allegation that the RSS was behind communal riots Golwalkar asked a counter question How is that there are no riots in Nagpur where the RSS is the strongest ? But according to the RSS sources it elf the story is slightly different The year 1927 was a landmark in the history of the RSS it held its first officers camp the first *Guru Dakshina* was started and the Sar Sangh Chalak was appointed This year also saw the Nagpur Hindu Muslim riots The Sangh put new spirit in the Hindus and they turned the tables on Muslims [20]

The RSS definitely instils discipline and good conduct in accordance with their own notions of goodness and discipline among their cadre But from all accounts it discourages thinking and reasoning The youth are indoctrinated to fit into an authoritarian system in which the top most man the supreme leader is nominated The common belief among the RSS men about their supreme leader Golwalkar as revealed in a study of the RSS shows the strength of indoctrination and superstitious bent of their mind

1 Guruji is the only man of his type in the country He is a superman and the breath and soul of RSS

18 S B Saxena *O* *Cit* Pp 93-101
19 [illegible] Pp 14 147
20 [illegible] Pp [illegible]

2 They have utmost love for him and believe that they can never be misled by him He is infallible
3 Guruji can foresee the future and so is called Yugdrashta
4 He never reads newspapers He is able to know the news through meditation
5 His chest is as hard as stone because he observes *Akhand Brahmacharya*
6 He has personally contacted the largest number of individuals in the world
7 He has the finest and the strongest memory
8 He has command over *Vedas* and has read 26 000 books
9 He takes little rest and never cares for pain
10 He is one of the best orators [21]

No wonder members of an organization who entertain such fantastic superstitions are the natural followers of Golwalkarism It is apparently an interdependent phenomenon while the leader speaks for the followers the followers choose the ideologies and the leadership of their liking In this context we may quote a comment for its own intrinsic merit which says Hence the RSS youth given more favourable circumstances can be in India what was Hitler youth in Germany Fascist youth in Italy and what the Mao youth is in China today If disciplin organised centralism and organic collective consciousness means Fascism the RSS is not ashamed to be called Fascist The silly idea that Fascism and totalitarianism are evils and parliamentarianism and Anglo American types of democracy are holy should be got rid of from our minds if we want to approach problems realistically and bring solutions for them [22] Irrespective of this comment we have already seen the amazing similarity of Nazism with Golwalkarism If Golwalkar s view that The non Hindu people in Hindustan must either adopt the Hindu culture and language or may stay in this country wholly subordinated to the Hindu nation claim ing nothing deserving no privileges far less any preferential treat ment—not even citizen rights [23] is put to practice then what

21 S B Saxena, *Op Cit Sociologist* Vol. III 1960
22 Anthony Elenjimittam *The Philosophy and Action of the RSS for the Hind Swaraj* (Quoted by Craig Baxter *Op Cit* Pp 148-49)
23 M S Golwalkar *We or Our Nationhood Defined* Pp 55 56

follows in this country cannot be any different from Fascism or Nazism

How do We Explain ?

One may ask what are those variables which explain the presence of an ideology and movement like the RSS Jana Sangh complex in the prevailing Indian conditions ? In fact the appeal of this ideology is presently more intense elsewhere than in its place of origin Why did it float away like this ? What could be the reason that this ideology is more popular in certain areas of the country rather than in other places ? Of course until and unless a thorough field study is made no definite answer could be given to this question However in the meanwhile certain tentative explanations may be sought

(1) In which part of social structure do we locate this ideology ? Knowing as we do the characteristic caste orientation and religious bent of revivalist activism we may ask the question how far the higher incidence of Brahminical caste in a region is associated with the greater appeal of this ideology to the area

(2) How does the rate of literacy among people affect the degree of appeal of revivalism ? What specific correlation do we come across between incidence of illiteracy and incidence of revivalist ideology of the Jana Sangh[24] in different regions in India ?

(3) What are those possible elements of culture with which this revivalist ideology is linked up ? Remnants of feudalism ? Lack of political consciousness ? Or general economic backwardness ? What is the nature of correlation with such factors in an area and the prevalence of revivalism

Brahminical Factor

If election results and the votes cast in favour of various parties are taken as an index of ideological predisposition of the population then what is commonly called the Hindi belt seems to have some special attraction for the RSS Jana Sangh ideology Broadly speaking this also happens to be the traditional Brahminical region of India Herbert Risley in *The People of India* (1915) has put the Brahmins as 10 per cent of the population in

24 Here it is assumed that ideologically RSS and Jana Sangh are the same Votes cast in favour of the Jana Sangh are taken as the measure of their ideological appeal

Uttar Pradesh (United Provinces) Central India and Rajasthan (Rajputana) He also expressed the view that they were strongest in the original centre that is Uttar Pradesh [25] A contemporary sociologist Dr Yogendra Singh comes to the conclusion though slightly differently, that in Northern India a strong peasant class is emerging which does not favour radical ideology It often tends to be attracted by militant rightist ideology of Jana Sangh He classifies the Southern and the Eastern regions of India as ideologically radical and the Northern region including Maharashtra Gujarat Punjab Haryana and probably Rajasthan and Western U P as ideologically rightist This view of his is based on a sophisticated approach to stratification system of these regions [26] However if votes cast in favour of the Jana Sangh is taken as index then Maharashtra Gujarat and to some extent Punjab have no claim to be included among the areas of conservativism

(a) The percentage of votes secured by the Jana Sangh in the 1967 election speaks eloquently of its ideological appeal to Hindi speaking electorates In Uttar Pradesh the Jana Sangh secured 21 6 per cent of the total votes polled during the Assembly election and won 98 seats in Madhya Pradesh it secured 28 2 per cent of votes and won 78 seats in Haryana 14 4 per cent votes and 12 seats in Bihar 10 5 per cent votes and 27 seats and in Rajasthan 11 7 per cent votes and 22 seats

(b) As against this in the Eastern part of the country in West Bengal it got only 1 3 per cent votes and 1 seat in Assam 2 per cent votes and no seat and in Orissa 0 5 per cent votes and no seat

(c) Similarly the Southern part of the country showed no appeal to this ideology In Andhra the Jana Sangh secured 2 1 per cent votes and 3 seats in Tamil Nadu 0 1 per cent votes and no seat in Mysore 3 1 per cent votes and 4 seats and in Kerala 0 9 per cent votes and no seat Among other things it may be noted that in both Eastern and Southern regions Brahminical population is sparse According to Risley they are 3 per cent in Bengal 2 per cent in Assam and 3 per cent in Madras

25 H H Risley *The People of India* P 125
26 Yogendra Singh Political Modernization in India—Concepts and Process Paper read at the Golden Jubilee of Department of Sociology Bombay University (Unpublished) P 19

which in 1915 means almost the whole South

Education

(a) Not only do higher incidence of Brahminical caste and revivalist ideology seem to be coinciding in the Hindi area but there is also a possible correlation between the educational back wardness of the region and revivalism All the states of the Hindi region are glaringly at the bottom of the general literacy rates in India In fact all those states which have shown any appreciation for the Jana Sangh are predominantly illiterate According to 1961 statistics the ranking of these states in terms of their literacy are thus Bihar 18 Uttar Pradesh 20 Himachal Pradesh 21 Madhya Pradesh 22 and Rajasthan 23 And literacy rate in the area is ranging from 152 per thousand in Rajasthan to 184 per thousand in Bihar

(b) *Meanwhile the Eastern states where the Jana Sangh* ideology has no hold rank thus in terms of literacy rates West Bengal 10 Assam 11 and Orissa 15 Their literacy rates per thousand range from 217 in Orissa to 293 in West Bengal

(c) When we go to the Southern states the correlation is more pronounced Kerala comes 2nd in rank in the whole of the country Tamil Nadu 5th and Mysore 12th and Andhra 16th The literacy rate in this region ranges from 212 per thousand in Andhra to 468 per thousand in Kerala[27] Among the major language groups the position of the Hindi speaking people is the lowest in literacy In a descending order of literacy rate come Malayalis Tamils Gujaratis Maharashtrians Bengalis Kanna das Punjabis Oriyas Telugus and then the Hindi speaking people

Feudal Background

The amount of compensation payable on account of zamin dari abolition if taken as an index to the extent of feudal chara cter of the respective areas give us the distinctive picture of feudal influence or the comparative absence of it in these different regions

(a) In the Northern region of Uttar Pradesh Bihar Raja sthan and *Madhya Pradesh the total compensation payable to* zamindars was Rs 476 90 crores

(b) In the Eastern area of Assam Orissa and West Bengal

27 See Appendix VIII *The Gazetteer of India Vol I*

the amount was Rs 85 18 crores

(c) And in the four states of the South the amount payable was only 31 39 crores [28] This reveals a very positive correlation between the revivalist ideology of the Jana Sangh and remnants of feudalism Even after making allowances for the differential size or population of the regions the Hindi region would prove to be highly feudal

Political Consciousness

(a) The next question is about the level of political consciousness of people who believe in this ideology? What is the nature of association between political consciousness and revivalism? Percentage of valid votes polled in the General Election to the State Assemblies in 1967 if accepted as an index of political consciousness of the people in various states shows a differential map of political consciousness of various states of India Such a map would indicate that in U P the percentage of valid votes cast was 50 8 in Rajasthan it was 55 in Madhya Pradesh 49 7 and in Bihar it was 48 9

(b) In the case of Eastern region in Assam this percentage was 57 1 in Orissa 41 3 and in West Bengal it was 62 8

(c) In the South it was 73 6 in Tamil Nadu 73 in Kerala, 59 4 in Mysore and 66 in Andhra Thus in order of degree of political consciousness first was Southern region second Eastern region and third and the last the Northern Hindi region And the fact that this is the area which has shown receptivity to revivalism of the Jana Sangh indicates that revivalism and lack of political consciousness are interdependent factors which coexist

Economic Poverty

Lastly while discussing the general economic backwardness we may add that in terms of per capita income all the above referred four Hindi speaking states fall far below the all India average and on the whole constitute the bulk of India s economically backward areas

(a) According to 1961 statistics the per capita income of U P is Rs 297 Madhya Pradesh Rs 285 Rajasthan Rs 267 and Bihar Rs 221

28 Calculations from *India 1959* P 130

(b) In the Eastern region in Assam it is Rs 333, in Orissa Rs 276 and in West Bengal Rs 465

(c) In the Southern states in Madras it is Rs 334 in Kerala it is Rs 315 and in Mysore Rs 305 and Andhra Rs 287

How callous and irresponsible is the governmental leader ship in the major Hindi states is borne out of the fact that the Government of Uttar Pradesh spends only Rs 13 53 per head on education medical and health facilities in the state In Bihar the amount is still less—only Rs 9 75 per head The expenditure in Madhaya Pradesh is Rs 18 55 per head The comparative figure for Kerala is Rs 33 04 per head for Tamil Nadu Rs 25 18 per head Assam Rs 21 41 and West Bengal Rs 20 61 The all India average is Rs 19 20 per head [29]

The Gestalt of Backwardness

From this analysis we find the presence of a gestalt of various factors inseparably fused into the situation in the Hindi region which consequently has become a receptive ground for revivalism Even a cursory survey reveals a very suggestive coincidence of a higher percentage of Brahminical elements in the population extremely poor literacy widespread feudal back ground a comparative absence of political consciousness as well as economic backwardness in this area A higher occurrence of Brahmins in the place should be viewed not so much as a caste issue but as something to be equated with the hold of conserva tive and superstitious religious mythology and to that extent as resistance to change The *Varna* system feudalism illiteracy lack of political consciousness and economic backwardness are inter dependent and mutually complementary in the situation The caste system with its sharply divided status groups and aversion to manual labour among the Brahmins is impossible in non feudal societies Similarly illiteracy has been a functional device of the caste system to keep away the common people at a safer distance from the sources of power and prestige The same is the case with political consciousness if it is understood as the know ledge of power structure in society then it is a functional pre requi site for both caste system and feudalism to keep people at a low

29 The data refer to 1967 68 See *Report of the Finance Commission* 1969 P 173

level of political consciousness so that the upper strata may be insulated against the onslaught of the underdog. The bigness of the big depends upon the smallness of the small is nowhere so crudely expressed as in a caste ridden feudal order. And religious mythology and world view has always been instrumental to the upper castes to legitimize the *status quo*. Thus we find the social structure in this region due to various historical reasons provides an existential basis for backward looking revivalist ideology of the Jana Sangh. Similarly the contrary social conditions found in the Eastern and Southern regions and the comparative absence of Jana Sangh influence in those states also proves though negatively, the same point.

In the discussion so far we have left out Maharashtra and Gujarat. These two states are just the opposite of Hindi region in so far as their higher literacy, political consciousness, comparative absence of feudalism, higher per capita income and even lower incidence of Brahminical elements in the population are concerned. It cannot be an accident that the Jana Sangh has failed to create any impression in those states. The example of Maharashtra is especially instructive because though the founding fathers of modern revivalism as an organized force belonged to that state, the fact that the ideology could not gain much favour in that area (with the exception of Shiv Sena) is a positive proof of the relationship between ideology and social structure. In this context the following statement becomes meaningful

The Jana Sangh has practically no strength in Gujarat, Maharashtra, Andhra, Mysore, Kerala, Madras, Orissa, Bengal and Assam. Its popularity is then confined to the Hindi speaking states and mostly parts of U P, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh. The social structure and the cultural tradition of the people of other states will not allow the Jana Sangh to take root there. There are greater chances of D M K becoming a political force in the U P and Madhya Pradesh than the Jana Sangh becoming a political force in Madras or Kerala[30]

Whom does it Serve?

Having seen that the Hindi region has a structural weakness for the backward looking obscurantist ideology of the

30 K.P Karunakaran "State Politics (Regionalism) *Seminar* (87) P 23

Chieftain in his harem •

Now this is how Shivaji was symbolized during the Shiv Jayanti celebrations *According to Indian practice birth celebrations of great men are solemn occasions when at least momentarily* people display a mode of conduct befitting to the nature and quality of such heroes For instance Gandhi Jayanti is celebrated by spinning holding Bhajans doing social service preaching communal harmony non violence and peace Such a celebration symbolizes Gandhiji as he is in the minds of those who commemorate his greatness So how does Shiv Jayanti depict Shivaji ? One who is fond of rousing communal sentiments disturbing religious processions destroying mosques and enjoying communal dramas !

The Leadership

To a great extent the urban chaos and the regional frame of reference was responsible for the rise of the Shiv Sena leadership as well as its capacity to exploit the situation A few references to the personal background of Bal Thackeray would throw some light on the Shiv Sena leadership Thackeray was a cartoonist in the *Free Press Journal* of Bombay which like most English newspapers has a large number of South Indians on its staff Like cartoonists all over the world he has had clashes with news editors and sub editors over the quality of his cartoons Unfortunately Thakeray being just average came to the conclusion that there was antipathy to him only because he was not a South Indian That such clashes take place in Marathi Newspapers also never struck him Nor did it ever strike him that he owed his prominence as a cartoonist to a South Indian the late Sadanand who gave him a big boost by training him to think politically He also overlooked the fact that the best ideas for his cartoons were not his own but were given to him by South Indian News Editors That inspite of such conflicts the *Free Press Journal never employed* any South Indian to keep him down was never appreciated by him [7] After the death of Sadanand a number of journalists of the Free Press Journal resigned to start a co operative daily Thackeray also resigned along with them but

6 Prem Shankar Jha The Lessons of Bhiwandi *The Times of India Maga ine* 31 5 1970

7 A Bombay Journalist How did it Grow ? *Mainstream* 6 4 1968 p 13

he soon left the daily to start his own Cartoon Weekly called *Marmik* His leaving had no regional undertone His grouse against South Indians became more pronounced during this period His Weekly a family affair ran into difficulties in getting advertisements Thackeray used to complain that because the agencies were dominated by South Indians he was not being given advertisements It was explained to him that this was not so Advertisement agencies like most organizations operated on a commercial basis If his paper built up a big circulation then advertisements would come in [8] With his regional frame of reference could Thackeray accept this explanation ? No he did not

In his desparate attempt for survival he tried many techniques In the beginning he tried out being anti Muslim He made a big play about the infamous Usha Bhargava case of Jabalpur [9] As this did not click he tried other ways such as opposing Marathi crosswords and finally when he began to use a technique of propaganda which had already been used and perfected during the Samyukta Maharashtra movement there was a dramatic change in his favour Once he began to revive the paranoid feelings of his readers his readership increased and a populist political movement began [10] Thus Shiv Sena was born on June 19 1966

Divisive Propaganda and 'Non-Maharashtrian Conspiracy'

The very regional frame of reference was accentuated and exploited by the Shiv Sena in the context of the already described urban chaos of Bombay and through which the Chauvinist movement was built up It all started with the laudable idea of fighting the gangsterdom in Bombay which in the beginning appealed to all Then Bal Thackeray launched a campaign against the bootleggers of Bombay He claimed that the gangland was dominated by South Indians Though this was mostly incorrect it could not have been particularly difficult for his Marathi readers and listners to believe this He raised a question Why the gang land should be dominated by non Maharashtrians ? And he himself answered that it was because the political parties and trade

8 *Ibid* Pp 13-14
9 *Ibid* P 14
10 Dilip Chitre, *Op Cit* *The Hindustan Times* 28 2 1969

unions were controlled by the non Maharashtrians Again this was not true but whatever might be the arguments and facts against this line of appeal it was likely to provide a satisfactory explanation to the average Marathi reading public at least for the time being since they have been subjected to regional propa ganda for long He declared that all the lungiwalas are criminals gamblers illicit liquor distillers pimps goondas beggars and communists [11] I want the illicit liquor distiller to be Maharashtrian the goonda to be Maharashtrian the *Mawali* to be Maharashtrian [12] This line of propaganda must yield *good results when we realize that there are always rivalries among* goondas and bootleggers of various groups No wonder if the Maharashtrian goondas and bootleggers found a godfather in Bal Thackeray and his Shiv Sena This must have added to his strength and a new dimension to the movement he initiated

In the same manner Thackeray proceeded against Udipi Hotels and the Taxi trade The demand was Idli Sambhar must stop These hotels are depriving the Maharashtrians of business and employment It was argued that this state of affair is made possible because of the domination of hotel unions by non Maharashtrians Similarly the taxi trade in Bombay city is owned by non Maharashtrians—mainly Punjabis This again according to the Shiv Sena was because of non Maha rashtrian taxi trade union controlled by George Fernandes This was not at all true because the trade was in the hands of non Maharashtrians—Punjabis Parsis and others—ever since its beginning and long before the present trade union leaders were born

The next campaign was very rewarding for Thackeray This happened when Shiv Sena took up the plea that non Maha rashtrians should be sent out of Bombay For the first time on October 30 1966 the Sena impinged on the public mind in a big way At a rally at Shivaji Park the venom and vitriol that was poured out was directed against non Maharashtrians But the principal target was Shri George Fernandes who by then had pitted himself against Shri S K Patil and was vigorously

11 Quoted by Prabhakar Waidya *Shiv Sena The Fascist Menace* P 5
12 *Ibid* P 5

canvassing for his own election to the Lok Sabha At the end of the meeting some of the more inflamed members of the crowd stoned Udipi hotels The slogan they shouted were *Madra shana Haklum Lava* (Drive out the Madrasis) and *Idli Sambhar Bandh Kara* (Stop Idli Sambhar) [13] This was at a time when recession in Bombay was at its peak Unemployment was increasing and the educated youth was frustrated The plea that outsiders should be driven out of Bombay might have meant many things to the unemployed and the unaccommodated It can easily mislead such people to the belief that jobs and shelters would be found through this method

The South Indian office goers were accused of depriving the Maharashtrian of his job opportunity Thackeray went on to publish half truths about statistics of persons employed in various offices in Bombay and showed how the non Maharashtrians were monopolising jobs in Maharashtra at the cost of Maharashtrians One of the Shiv Sena publications came to the following con clusion in this regard after making one such so called survey Though outwardly Maharashtra appears growing rapidly industrially one cannot overlook the fact that the industries are being manned by outsiders They also find that in this land of their birth they cannot get a suitable opening while an outsider of comparable merit gets one for the mere asking because he has a godfather to lookafter his interests where Maharashtrians have none The truth is that the selection to these posts were not at all made on the score of merit [14] But a Maharashtrian scholar in a learned paper has expressed altogether a different view on this issue She says insistence on the strict adherence to rational principles of selection is fully justified However there is a lurking fear amongst the Marathi people that even if the rational principles are strictly followed they stand little chance of surpassing the South Indians in white collar and profe ssional jobs In interviews and opinions published in the Marathi press at that time Marathi officers and employers had acknow ledged the South Indian s skill in stenotyping his better know ledge of English and his industriousn ss In business industry administration in technical and scientific fields South Indians

13 [illegible] N Acharya The Growling Tiger *Mainstream* 6 4 68
14 Kapilacharya *Shiv Sena Speaks* Pp 13-14

have earned influential positions by merit and hard work [15]

Whatever might be the truth the unemployed and the frustrated Maharashtrian youth would find easier to believe the Shiv Sena line rather than taking pains to know the facts

Men placed under such circumstances can hardly think of the fact that Maharashtra has about 22 per cent of India s total capital investment and at the same time has only 9 per cent of India s population On the other hand the four Southern states with a population of 25 per cent of the total population of the country has only 15 per cent of the total capital investment The capital investment per head in Maharashtra is Rs 135 where as in the four southern States it is only Rs 33 per head [16] Again U P with a population of 16 65 per cent of the total population has only 7 25 per cent of the total investment

May be these facts do not attract the unemployed Maharashtrians While capital flows to Maharashtra from other parts of India naturally non Maharshtrians also will flow to Maharashtra in search of employment If this is prevented and if people in other states decide to boycott goods made in Maharashtra what will happen to maharashtra and the country ? How will the Shiv Sena line of driving away the non Maharashtrians affect the estimated four million Maharashtrians in other States of India ?[17] It is instructive to know that in every 10 000 people in Maharashtra only 275 are Hindi speaking whereas in Madhya Pradesh alone there are 266 Marathi people in every 10 000 of the population In Maharashtra there are 159 Kannada speaking people in every 10 000 population while there are 488 Marathi speaking people in Mysore in every 10 000 of the population [18] It is futile to think in these lines for those who have accepted the truth of Indian nationhood However this shows how Chauvinism can boomerang and what damage it can do to those whose cause it

15 Sudha Gogate Rise of Regionalism in Bombay City Paper read at the seminar on Regionalism and National Integration (January 25 to 28 19 0) under the auspices of National Integration Council and the University of Rajasthan See *Mainstream* 28 3 1970 P 23 Also Gangadharan and Sudha Gogate *The Shiv Sena Phenomenon* P 19

16 The data as per *Annual Survey of Industries 1961* Vol I quoted by Prabhakar Vaidya *Op Cit* Pp 16-17

17 *Ibid* P 16

18 *Gazetteer of India Vol I* Appendix VII—Proportion of persons speaking major languages in each of the States 1961

is pretending to plead Evidently Thackeray s sympathetic listners and readers do not bother To them the simple solution offered by a man obviously out to exploit the misfortune of people around him look very attractive

In all this propaganda there has been a continuous under current of the idea of non Maharashtrian conspiracy against the Maharashtrians Non Maharashtrian dominated trade union conspiracy against Maharashtrian South Indian conspiracy in the job market to keep out the Maharashtrians Udipi people s conspiracy against Maharashtrians taxiwalas conspiracy and so on and so forth This scapegoatism in the background of cultural factors already stated awakens in the mind of Maharashtrians strong in group feelings as well as the spirit of Shivaji to drive away the alien and fight against the imagined injustice More over it helps to console one s misfortune—unemployment in competence or whatever it might be—and shifts it all to the conspiracy of others The accusation that the present Union finance Minister Shri Y B Chavan was a concealed supporter of the movement was raised by some of the critics of the Shiv Sena In a typical ethnocentric style Shiv Sena exploited this in two fold ways First, this was cited as a typical example of non—Maharashtrians conspiracy to oust the only Maharashtrian leader at the all India level Second the Shiv Sena s defence of Chavan brought handsome dividend in the form of Chavan s sympathizers who are large in number in Maharashtra coming closer to it [19] It may be recalled that the Shanti S na chief of U P after his visit to Bombay immediately after the 1969 riots observed that the Shiv Sena supporters genuinely b lieve that Union Minister Y B Chavan is sympathetic to them

Imported Bossism

Like an octopus Shiv Sena became powerful as it had spread its tentacles to various directions—the gangsterdom the unemployed youth the capitalists the ruling circle and even some of the opposition parties came under its grip due to different reasons By defeating a politician of Krishna Menon s standing twice during 1967 elections to the Parliament the Shiv Sena demonstrated its unmistakable potentiality as an institution of

19 A Bombay Journalist *Op Cit* P 37 *Mainstream* 5 6 1968

political Bossism and attained a notoriety and status that brought it closer to seats of power—both political and economic—in the city of Bombay S K Patil s local man theory became effective only when it converged with the sons of the soil cry of the Shiv Sena to defeat the 'Lungiwala and crypto-communist This brought recognition to Shiv Sena from various sources opposed to the leftist ideology and the trade union movement

The frequent announcement from the police authorities that the Shiv Sena has nothing to do with this riot or that riot the common belief in Bombay that the police do not deal with the Shiv Sena the way they should the idea that the Government itself is partisan the admitted fact that the Police Commissioner made an unscheduled stop of former Finance Minister Morarji Desai s car on the way from aerodrome to facilitate the presentation of a memorandum by Shiv Sena—an incident which led to the unprecedented riots of 1969 in Bombay—are all facts which gave the Shiv Sena an image of being powerful and resourceful [20] During the 1969 riots Bal Thackeray who was put behind the bars was allowed to confer with political party leaders and issue statements Moreover police vans were used to broadcast his statement

Then comes the propaganda of deeds such as preventing and permitting of cinema shows stoning and looting of shops protecting and condoning of shopkeepers who pay their mite to the Shiv Sena to buy security of business and safety of their skin social services such as establishm nt of Shiv Sena stalls preventing sale of Municipal shops to non Maharashtrians and threats of picketing of teashops unless rates are reduced These deeds must have proved very remunerative to the Shiv Sena the earlier practice of certain goondas collecting *Hafta* from petty shopkeepers for providing them security thus got elevated to the level of a social movement whose leadership has approaches to the State Ministers police officials political parties and captains of industry All these give an impression of imported American bossism of the Tammany Hall type [21]

Though *in some respects the Shiv Sena looks* to be American in conception there is more of Hitlerism in its approach

20 K.K. Gangadharan Shiv Sena—Anti Social Movement , *Mainstream*
21 *Ibid*

Shiv S na m etings are big affairs carefully planned to build up the Senapati (Commander in Chief Bal Thackeray) His entry to the stage accompanied with the coterie of subordinates the saffron flags the garlanded bust of Shivaji singing of martial songs (*Povadas*) that speak of Maratha glory in the battlefield and the blast of *Tutari* to the martial notes of which Shivaji s legion galloped to battle and the fact that the organisation is no democratic nonsense deserve special mention The *Pramukh* that is Senapati has several *Shakha pramukhs* who take orders from him There is no committee no election nothing of the kind[22]

It is interesting to note the following words of Bal Thackaray Yes I am a dictator why should we have so many rulers? It is a Hitler that is needed in India today [23] Why should India want democracy? We must have a Hitler here [24] In his *Marmik* he published the blessings of a reader who says Be famous as Hitler be a Chhatrapati a king like Shivaji and rule over us [25] This reminds one of Nazi Germany where national pride became chauvinism suspicion of non Germans turned into consuming hatred and faith in leadership became blind dependency

Shiv Sena in the Interactional Setting

A social movement does not grow in isolation in a demoracy like ours it has to compete with other movements their appeals and ideologies Then how could Shiv Sena grow in a situation in which there existed strong trade union movements Communist and Socialist parties the Indian National Congress with its professions of secular democracy and socialist pattern the Jana Sangh with its extraordinary sense of nationalism and its advocacy of unitary government and patriotic fervour and also the ideology of free competition of the Swatantra type ? Apparently the Chauvinist fascist type of Shiv Sena has not even the slightest chance to survive in the company of these powerful forces which by their professed ideologies have to be in opposition to Shiv Sena But the fact is entirely different Each one of them in actual practice nursed the Shiv Sena with varying degrees of

22 H R Pardiwala *The Shiv Sena Why and Why Not?* Pp 8 9
23 *Nava Kal* (19 8 1967) Quoted by Prabhakar Waidya *Op Cit* P 4
24 Quoted *Ibid* P 4
25 Quoted *Ibid* P 27

affection

When one set of trade unionists were attacked by the Shiv Sena the rival trade unionists did not mind And at last in the heart of the working class in Parel the Girni Kamkar Union office was attacked by the Shiv Sena and Bal Thackaray issued a statement I am proud of the Shiv Sainiks who fought the reds [26] Communists and other progressive elements who opposed the Shiv Sena were inhibited by their regard for mass appeal They probably thought they should not offend the feelings of the masses *even if they were wrong* So the normal tendency was to disagree with the strategy and tactics but to agree with the grievances of the Shiv Sena

The Maharashtra Congress and the BPCC of S K Patil had rivalry of long standing So it is believed that the leadership of the Maharashtra Congress found an instrument in the Shiv S na to *Maharashtrianize* Bombay and *nullify* the non Maharashtrian dominated BPCC and its leader S K Patil The BPCC liked the Shiv Sena on two counts First for the help it wanted to defeat Krishna Menon Second the anti trade union and anti Communist stand of the Shiv Sena was to the liking of the capitalist financiers of the BPCC It may be recalled once when S K Patil was embarrassed by the Shiv Sena he told the Sena to make use of the money they were getting for the purpose for which it was given Similarly the PSP with its chronic hatred to Communists became comrades in arms of the Shiv Sena and together fought the Municipal elections It is believed the PSP has lost many of its workers to the Shiv Sena in the process

The Jana Sangh too liked Shiv Sena to defeat Krishna Menon Moreover anti Communism was very much to its taste So also the Swantantra Party found a very effective weapon of strike breakers and trade union breakers in Shiv Sena Thus Bal Thackaray s exploitation became the function of exploitability of a situation And in all this Chauvinism that was whipped up with its historical background and the present existential basis was such that it almost inhibited the other parties in calling a spade a spade and directly opposing it, even if they wanted to

26 *Free Press Journal* 30 12 1967 quoted *Ibid* P 7

Amoral and Hirable Instrument

In the context of these social processes and forces in the urban life of Bombay and the neighbourhood one may ask what is the function of Shiv Sena ? And whom does it serve and how?

1 As we have already seen Sena has activized strong regional consciousness and ethnocentric feeling—a type of atavism towards the Maratha imperial days which is not only irrelevant and unrealistic today, but positively harmful for the nation

2 It has employed this heightened regional frame of reference to create a split between the Maharashtrians and non Maharashtrians

3 On an irrational and linguistic basis it has wrongly educated the people to misunderstand the urban chaos and the misery that exists in the city by making scapegoat of outsiders Thus by diverting the attention of the people to the wrong direction it plays the role of a shield to all those agencies—the Government of Maharashtra the capitalist employers who fail to provide amenities and accommodation to their workers and also to the local administration

4 Under the pretext of driving out the outsiders Shiv Sena s pseudo social service of slum clearance actually hits the poor Maharashtrians The fact is that the biggest and the most important single linguistic group in the million hutment dwellers is Marathi Thackeray s demand that ' demolish and burn all the hutments if implemented the first and foremost victims will be the Marathi people [27] Hutment dwellers associations are mostly Left oriented bodies Attacking them serves the dual purpose of weakening the left and providing the land thus cleared of hutments to the rich class of speculators and blackmarketeers of luxury flats [28] Similarly the drive against street vendors under the pretext that it was against loon giwalls would really hurt the Maharashtrians because among the vendors the biggest chunk are the Marathi next come Sindhis and Uttar Bharatiyas and last come the Tamilians and Keraliyans [29]

27 Prabhakar Waidya *Ibid* P 23
28 *Ibid*
29 *Ibid*

5 The Shiv Sena s main role has been to break the trade union movement—by disrupting meetings playing the role of blacklegs attacking trade union offices and even allegedly attacking and murdering trade union leaders

6 It persistenty opposes the Communists and all shades of leftists and promises to keep the Bombay city safe from the Red menace

7 It is closely allied to the Swatantra Party and the reactionary elements in the Congress party or presently the Congress parties Shiv Sena had been actively campaigning for many reactionary Congressmen during the elections

8 The Shiv Sen chief Bal Thackeray has openly declared that Tatas and Birlas were the Bread givers and friends of the Marathi people [30] S K Patil once commanded Shiv Sena to utilize the financial resources received by it from certain sources for the purpose for which they are received [31]

One may safely conclude from these activities of the Shiv Sena that the revivalist and malignant regionalism that it whips up is only an effective yet unscrupulous form of mass appeal which has nothing to do with the welfare of even the Maharashtrains except that it helps the Sena to grow The power so gathered by the Shiv Sena goes to the making of an amoral institution of Political Boss which objectively speaking becomes a hirable instrument or a sword arm to defend the rich capitalist class and their collaborators in politics This is because revivalism which has no social basis today and if at all it has any that basis cannot be that of the masses would naturally be an instrument in the hands of the upper classes to confuse and confound the forces opposed to them

30 S G Sardesai Cause for Concern *Mainstream* 6 5 68 P 15
31 *Ibid* P [illegible]

CHAPTER VII

Modernization, Not Revivalism

The analysis of revivalism made in the historical back ground of Indian social structure reveals various dimensions It is intimately connected with a vague and imaginary reference group of the past constructed partly on the basis of details drawn from the ancient scriptures and partly as a matter of projection of revivalists current interests and world view into the past

Dimensions of Revivalism

1 *Racial* The major strain of revivalism as it is traced back to past becomes racism which invokes a process of un pleasant and rival memories in the racial mosaic of India

2 *Linguistic* The fallacious claim of the revivalist that all languages of India are of Sanskrit origin had its repercus sions For instance according to Dr S K Chatterjee Brahmi nical orthodox scholarship sought to find in Tamil just a dialect of the Aryan language—a kind of Dravidian Prakriti And now owing to political and other reasons the pendulum has swung to the other end and some ardent Tamilophils are trying to derive Sankrit and the Aryan speech from the old Tamil [1] In the multilingual background of Indian culture revivalism is bound up with linguism

1 *The Gazetteer of India* Vol I, P 369

3 *Cultural* Invocation of mythological stories and culture heroes of the past with reference to group rivalries suc cess and defeat in a style likely to arouse group consciousness and identification with opposite camps by the present generation

In the context of contemporary regionalism and communa lism some of the culture heroes become regional and communal symbols and lose their symbolic value as integrating forces Shivaji is a rather recent example to this effect

4 *Intellectual* Revivalism is basically anti intellectua lism and thrives on sentiments Its self defence falsifies history and culture and is an obstacle to objective self evaluation and change

5 *Social* The social outlook of revivalism is obscurantist and it tries to defend all outmoded institutions like caste monarchy and other elements of feudal social order and is oppo sed to the idea of equality of sexes

6 *Political* Politically revivalism is chauvinistic paro chial, anti liberal and expansionistic

7 *Economic* The revivalist outlook on social structure if read along with its economic view would amount to a plea in defence of the sectarian interest of the upper castes or classes The organismic view held by the revivalist permits the exploitation of the small fry for the benefit of the big brothers silently and for the common good as it is said of the totality

8 *Ethical* The activist ethics of revivalism is highly ethnocentric and communal and advocates double standard of morality It is anti humanitarian

The revivalism rather than integrating and strengthening *the nation promotes racial and linguistic rivalries* causes counter movements often revivalist in character Employment of mytho-logy and symbols of the past such as the frequent reference by Golwalkar that manliness lies in establishing his superiority over the *rakshasas* and vanquishing *rakshasas* has been our tradition since hoary times might prove disastrous in a country where there are ten crores of scheduled castes and tribes How such attempts at invoking communal or even racial consciousness among a section of people are bound to recoil can be understood if one can think of the reaction to such ideas among the people

The Three Phases of Revivalism

In the course of our treatment of revivalism we found that it was born in a peculiar confrontation of cultures—a situation comprising of feudal India a foreign rule and a foreign language and aspects of modern administration and change introduced at the instance of the British At that juncture for the conservative and the anti-change elements revivalism became the ideology of defence And because of the presence of foreign rule which was also the agent of change revivalism got mixed up with nationalism when such elements joined the freedom struggle

But during the Gandhi Nehru era when under the impact of mass movements of non violent activism and secularization of national struggle along with the propagation of social equality, the main body of revivalism got separated out of the mainstream Thereafter revivalism went underground drawing inspiration from aggressive religious activism and also from the last of the Hindu empires it went on organizing till it erupted in Gandhi Murder

As the political power was passed on to Indians and a democratic polity began to function revivalism was found handy for the furtherance of group interests representing landlords rich peasants traders and also backward section of capitalists Modern means of communication technology rational organization propaganda techniques and parliamentary democracy—all became useful instruments in the hands of revivalists With the result superstitious religious celebrations *melas* meetings and congregations of *yogis* and *gurus* became unprecedentedly widespread and popular Fake sadhus and *Babas* began to receive national publicity which helped to cultivate their national image Astrology palmistry omens of all kind auspicious numbers and occasions were also widely publicised through newspaper columns This in a country of illiterate and backward millions proved to be more effective mass education in orthodoxy than all other efforts to the contrary Thus in a developing situation of mixed economy, democratic institutions religious propaganda and secular state and of science and technology urbanization and industrialisation there appeared certain chaotic and contradictory conditions which could give a new lease of life to

revivalism Such conditions in contemporary India may be briefly mentioned

1 Linkage between Politicians and Spiritualists

Religious and revivalist elements—sadhus gurus and astrologers—and the ruling circle establish mutual linkage for the benefits of each others The ministers whose fortunes fluctuate frequently satisfy their superstitious needs of knowing their future besides making a democratic investment of their image among the ignorant masses and devotees of such religious men On the other hand such fake sadhus and gurus secure an amount of Governmental protection which they are often badly in need apart from serving the need of publicising their superstitions through higher circles even to the extent of influencing the government in many ways

2 Democracy and Preservation of Status quo

The mass awakening and structural changes in society is disturbing the upper segments and their vested interests At the same time the society stands on a subterranean mass of primitive superstitions and ignorance Such of those who wish to oppose change find it easy to exploit this unfortunate situation and make use of democratic institutions and modern mass media for the furtherance of revivalism which in fact for them is resistance to change or preservation of status quo

3 Secularism and Multi religious State

Secular state in India has been completely under the sway of the multi religious society Consequently tolerance of multi religious existence is equated as secularism in India This reality when translated through the ballot box becomes a state depending upon multi religious votes and therefore a multi religious state This may be a truism cheapest and easiest to practice However instead of the state reflecting the religiously divided and superstition ridden social structure the opposite process could also have been possible—the secular state and its leadership could have initiated change in such a manner that secularism could have got an upper hand over religious and revivalist elements in society In the absence of this latter process religious orthodoxy often secured state patronage and protection for their propagation of superstitious customs and celebrations

4 Spiritual Trade and the Infra structure of Revivalism

Gods festivals celebrations and yogis are trade and commerce for many in a comp titive society Hence there is commercial and occupational interest deeply mixed up with all such religiosity and revivalism There are gods and babas specialised in giving protection to criminals right advice to punters *mudka walas* and lotteryticket holders For the blackmarketeers smugglers and speculators who ride the high tide of uncertainty in the ocean of success Gods and saints are a week end recreation of easing their nerves so that they may start afresh with a clear conscience Increasing such uncertainities and insecurities of life *is helping to multiply their tribe particularly in chaotic urban* centres Such men and women and their institutions constitute the infra structure upon which the organized and politicalized revivalism thrives at present

5 Monolithic Revivalism and Federal Structure

Indian revivalism with the aid of religion and culture has been attempting to build up a monolithic society Since there are many cultures and religions and also the federal state it is impossible for revivalism to be monolithic Hence revivalism in reality becomes regionalism in India Ethnocentric appeal as it works through the federal Indian state politics can easily degenerate into regional chauvinism of the DMK brand or Punjabi *Suba pattern and not to speak of Shiv Sena regression* which is a class by itself Cultural and linguistic basis and contemporary poverty and unemployment become inextricably mixed up at the hands of political manipulators—and in a phenomenon like Shiv Sena this happens even at the instance of its financiers and food givers who make use of the institution of political Boss for the furtherance of their sectarian interests

6 The Absence of Radical Social Reform Movement

Unless serious efforts are made to reform and educate the *people democracy in a highly traditional society may mean* revivalism or democratization of ignorance and superstitions After a p riod of social reform movement when there was a real debate and an attempt to change the outlook of the people the country parti ularly after independence seems to have given up

that initiative. At present the conscious sections of our people confine to political parties and there the democratic compulsions of vote catching seems to inhibit them from entering into a debate on sensitive religious and social issues. Thus the absence of a mass movement or even a determined well organized public opinion against obscurantism leaves the field free for revivalism without any social constraint. Masquerading *sanyasis* make encroachment upon footpaths, fictitious temples appear suddenly on road sides and block the traffic, ministers display reluctance to take oath during inauspicious days, Babas under the patronage of ministers, bureaucrats and businessmen demonstrate the miracle of producing foreign made watches and rings out of thin air—and all this in the secular republic of India go on uncontested in the absence of a radical social reform movement, one that is consciously rational and scientific in approach. In the midst of traditionalism and backwardness to preach the maxim of *vox populi is vox dei* in matters of social life and outlook becomes a political quackery and the least line of resistance.

Modernization and Not Indianization

Revivalism or Indianization is helpless for the integration of Indian society. This is obvious from the analysis made so far. Its backward looking approach and techniques eliminate and antagonize many religious groups and castes and tribes and also deprives them of their historical identity. Its antediluvian and obscurantist world view is dysfunctional in the contemporary society except to a microscopic section of political, religious and economic exploiters of the common man. It is also noticeable that ethnocentric revivalism in the federal structure of Indian nation easily degenerates into regional chauvinism. Moreover there is greater danger from revivalism in the context of a capitalistic democracy under which both the advantages of democratic institutions and the technological development are likely to be misused for the furtherance of revivalism, especially in the direction of religious oriented fascism. Thus if revivalist model is unsuitable for India, what else is the alternative?

Modernization

After more than a century of modern science and technology in this country, now there is hardly any resistance to modern

tools and other material cultural traits In the days of first railway travel from Bombay to Thana people were afraid of breaking their bones by sitting in the railway carriages But today Indians are well adapted to jet travel That is the measure of our acceptance of modern material culture. Material equipments and items have a capacity to convincingly demonstrate their utility and quality so that the people from traditional cultures do not find it difficult to change over. But in the field of ideas attitudes and institutions this is not true Mainly because mental dispositions of people are conditioned by the traditional culture at an early stage of their personality development

It is in the field of outlook or perspective of Indians modernity is generally lacking and marked contradictions exist This of course means we have a concept of modern man from whom Indians as a class differ. Here for this purpose we accept the concept of modern man as formulated by Alex Inkeles as a part of a study of modernization process among workers and peasants in six developing countries [5] The modern man is characterised by (1) readiness for new experiences innovation and change (2) a disposition to form opinions on a large number of problems not only in his immediate environment but also outside of it (3) orientation to the present or the future rather than to the past (4) Belief and involvement in planning as a way of handling life (5) Efficacy—belief that man can learn to dominate his environment to advance his own purpose and goals rather than being dominated entirely by the environment (6) Calculability—does not agree that everything is determined either by fate or by the whims of others belief in reasonably lawful world under human control (7) stress on dignity and respect of others (8) faith in science and technology (9) belief in distributive justice or rational distribution of rewards

Even if these characteristics are relative and vague—it would not be incorrect to say that the overwhelming majority of Indians are far from this configuration of qualities Though science and technology is spreading the hold of tradition is hardly waning With the result there is pronounced contradiction in the behaviour of our people In the areas of customs

5 Alex Inkeles Modernization of man (*In Modernization—The Dynamics of Growth* Ed by Myron Weiner) Pp 141 144

beliefs and rituals associated with traditional life even those who are educated and scientifically trained go on playing the time old and fossilized roles as if they were unaffected by their training and knowledge Hence we have the South Indian scientists working in a meteorological institution who are known scrupulously to avoid anything important during the time believed to be presided over by the inauspicious Rahu [6] Recently after the split a very important and urgent meeting of Congress (0) at Delhi was reportedly put off with due regard to *Rahu kala* A wide range of our educated and occupationally modernized people believe in stark superstitions about omens auspicious numbers and dates and magical performances of all kind The impact of science and especially the scientific outlook has not been long or intense enough to bring about radical changes in vast areas of life other than the occupational or official roles Indian renaissance was name sake and short lived and hence reason is yet to enter into our social outlook

In this situation there is a real possibility of integration of Indian society—and that has to be around the concept of modern man as we have described one who believes in the present and the future and accepts the idea of material progress and human capacity to control his destiny The revivalist attempt at integration through Indianization splits the people because of its atavistic focus In fact not only Hindu religious attempt but any religious attempt of integration in the contemporary society—particularly in a multi religious situation is bound to split the national consciousness into contending and mutually suspicious group consciousness The Hindu revivalists in their folly by advocating Hinduization or Indianization have made themselves and the community which they claim to represent a negative reference group in the eye of the minorities This has made integration almost a repelling word for the minorities

Integration therefore is possible only when the various sections of Indians move forward to a new ground—a ground in which sectarian past and its identities are replaced by the factors of modernity Such a process will involve a radical movement calculated to clean up the superstitious irrelevencies

6 M N *Srinivas Seminar 128 P 12*

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from all groups of minorities and majorities aimed at the building up of a new social structure And only such a renovated structure could provide the necessary support for a really secular state and only then and there democracy could be meaningful In this process it would not be necessary to advocate acceptance of any bodies religious heroes customs and festivals as the rallying points of nationalism The common bond of national community would automatically emanate from the secular state and its cultural economic social recreative and symbolic life Thus the new society so developed will be neither Hindu nor Muslim or of any other religion Therefore in such a secularly integrated and modern India none of the groups would have any feeling of comparative deprivation and on the other hand all will have similar sense of belongingness

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